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**FOOT TRAFFIC EFFECTS ON GRASSLAND SOIL PROPERTIES AT  
THE UNITED STATES AIR FORCE ACADEMY, COLORADO, USA**

**BY**

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**B.S., Purdue University, 1993**

**THESIS**

**Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements  
for the degree of Master of Science in  
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## Abstract

Soils and vegetation are subjected to stress and disturbance under human foot traffic. This study was conducted to determine whether cadet and other training activities at the United States Air Force Academy adversely impacted soils and vegetation. In the summer of 1998, the effects of the cadet and other training on bulk density, infiltration, soil water holding capacity, soil total C and N concentrations, soil C:N ratio, total aboveground biomass, and litter layer were comparatively studied at the Air Force Academy's Jack's Valley Training Area, on Pring sandy loam (coarse-loamy, mixed Aridic Haploborolls) and Tomah loamy sand (coarse-loamy, mixed Boralfic Argiborolls). In May-June 1998 after 2 years of intensive training use, bulk densities of the top 6 cm of soil were measured. Mean bulk densities on the high use site ( $1.37 \text{ g cm}^{-3}$ ) and moderate use site ( $1.30 \text{ g cm}^{-3}$ ) were significantly different from the mean bulk density of the low use (reference) site ( $1.04 \text{ g cm}^{-3}$ ). Adjusted bulk densities (adjusted for coarse fragment content) followed a similar pattern. In August 1998, following the 3rd basic cadet training encampment on the research area, bulk density samples were collected (post-encampment) and compared to the samples from earlier in the summer (pre-encampment). Post-encampment mean bulk densities and adjusted bulk densities were significantly higher than the pre-encampment bulk densities. Mean infiltration rates on the high use site ( $0.63 \text{ cm min}^{-1}$ ) and the moderate use site ( $0.67 \text{ cm min}^{-1}$ ) were significantly different from the mean infiltration rate on the low use site ( $3.83 \text{ cm min}^{-1}$ ). Mean soil water holding capacities of the three sites were not significantly different. The soil total C concentration, soil total N concentration, and C:N ratio of the three sites in each of the three depths (0-5, 5-10, and 10-20 cm) were not significantly different (or, if a significant difference

between intensities of use was found, no pattern existed to explain the difference).

Descriptive comparisons of the total aboveground biomass and litter showed a 68% decrease in total aboveground biomass and 91% decrease in litter when the high use site was compared to the low use site. Therefore, training use appears to adversely affect bulk density, infiltration, total aboveground biomass, and litter. Without restoration practices being implemented, previous research indicates that sites with increased bulk densities, decreased infiltration, and decreased total aboveground biomass and litter would be subject to increased soil erosion.

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## **Introduction**

The mission of the United States Air Force is one of national defense. In order to accomplish this vital mission, the Air Force must produce qualified officers to lead the Air Force in protecting the nation. The United States Air Force Academy (USAFA) is one of the Air Force's three primary sources for producing qualified officers. Due to the military nature of its mission, the United States Air Force Academy must conduct training exercises in natural areas in order to prepare its cadets for future war and peacetime contingency operations. In carrying out its mission to produce qualified officers, the Academy uses the vast natural resources present in the Colorado Springs, Colorado, area for training the cadets in orienteering, physical fitness, combat arms, and survival. This use, though vital to the mission of producing qualified Air Force officers, produces some negative consequences on the natural resources of the area.

In recent years the Department of Defense (DoD) has become more concerned with the natural resources entrusted to it on its 10.1 million hectares of land. As the third largest federal land management agency, the DoD plays a very important role in natural resources management. Sherri W. Goodman, Deputy Under Secretary of Defense for Environmental Security, stated:

“Sustaining our Nation’s military training and testing lands through ecosystem management is among the most important DoD environmental goals. As a critical element of ecosystem management, biodiversity conservation contributes directly to military readiness. Biodiversity helps us achieve military readiness in harmony with nature.”

The training activities undertaken at the United States Air Force Academy, if not properly managed, may ultimately lead to degraded plant and animal habitats and diminished water quality in watersheds of the area. This research project, therefore, was designed to complement a larger, proactive United States Air Force Academy funded research effort to develop a natural resource management tool for all of the Academy's ecosystems. Included within this research project was an analysis of the impacts from cadet and other training activities (Army, Air Force Reserve, Air National Guard, Reserve Officer Training Corps cadets, Boy Scouts of America, and federal, state, and local law enforcement agencies).

Soil, as one of these natural resources, can be disturbed by mechanical means (e.g., heavy equipment), livestock and animal trampling, and human recreational use. It is hypothesized that the training activities undertaken at the United States Air Force Academy Jack's Valley Training Area lead to soil and vegetative disturbances most similar to the impacts caused by human recreational use. Thus, these potential consequences were studied using many of the methods predominantly employed in recreational use impact assessment.

## **Objectives and Justification**

**The objectives of this research study were:**

1. to determine the effects of foot traffic from cadet and other training uses on grassland vegetative, soil physical, and soil chemical properties; and
2. to use these measured soil and vegetative properties to assess the potential for soil erosion.

In their Statement of Work, McClendon and Childress (1997) wrote that the United States Air Force Academy Jack's Valley Training Area (JVTA) is used extensively for mission-essential cadet training activities. Although these training activities are necessary for leadership development, it is important to recognize that good land stewardship is considered a crucial component of the United States Air Force Academy's overall mission. "An important aspect of good land stewardship is the determination of proper land use, i.e., the level of use that can be sustained by an area without inducing a downward trend in ecological condition." This level is often termed the "carrying capacity" of the area (McClendon and Childress, 1997; Price et al., 1997).

The Ecological Dynamics Simulation (EDYS) Model is being developed with support from the United States Army, the National Park Service, the Natural Resources Conservation Service, and the Agricultural Research Service. The EDYS Model is a land management tool for investigating ecological responses to a combination of anthropic and natural factors or disturbances. Application of the EDYS Model at the Jack's Valley Training Area will determine its ecological carrying capacity (McClendon and Childress, 1997).

The EDYS Model is actually a system composed of 3 separate models: an ecosystem dynamics model (the Community Model), a Spatial Model, and a Management Model.

Childress et al. (1999) stated:

“This system is designed to characterize objectives for a proposed training activity, estimate training and maintenance costs, evaluate effects of the activity on current land use and environmental management practices, estimate ecological and environmental effects of the proposed activity for each of the alternative areas, and evaluate remediation and restoration activities appropriate for each area.”

The Community Model is composed of six modules: Climate, Soils, Plant Growth, Community Structure, Animal, and Disturbance modules (Childress et al., 1999). This research project studied the impacts of human trampling at JVTA by drawing on years of recreation impact analysis research. Results of the human trampling research will contribute vital information to the Soils and Disturbance modules of the EDYS model. In combination with the trampling impact data on the grassland soils research area and the JVTA field data collected by Dr. Terry McClendon’s research team, the EDYS model will be used to estimate the carrying capacity of Jack’s Valley Training Area. Armed with this tool, Air Force Academy environmental management personnel will be better prepared in their ongoing, proactive effort to make sound land management decisions.

## Previous Work

Past research on human foot traffic disturbance (trampling) of soil has focused primarily on recreational sites (e.g., campgrounds, trails, and picnic areas). Earlier studies found that foot traffic has not only caused direct compaction of the soil, but it has also led to many other significant impacts. Compaction by foot traffic has been shown to increase root exposure and soil erosion, as well as to decrease the infiltration rate, root penetration and growth, soil moisture content, thickness of surface A horizons, depth of litter layer, and vegetative cover (Settergen and Cole, 1970; Dunn et al., 1980). Impacts of recreational activities on soils, as will be discussed throughout this thesis research, are generally concentrated in the litter layer and surface A horizon.

Dunn (1984) stated that studies on recreational impacts are usually conducted using one of three methods: 1) comparative; 2) longitudinal; and 3) simulation. Comparative studies are the most frequently employed of the three methods to assess recreational impacts. This comparative research method uses undisturbed natural sites as control sites and adjacent recreational sites as test sites. The recreational site impacts are then assessed by comparing the differences between the measurements collected on the control site to the measurements made on the adjacent test sites. The longitudinal research method usually employs a series of permanent sites located across a recreational area to measure the long-term impacts of recreation. The simulation method typically employs mechanical devices to simulate the impacts caused by recreation.

Compaction is the most widely recognized impact resulting from recreational use. Studies have found that recreational sites were most heavily compacted and void of

vegetation in the center of the activity area (Cole, 1982). This compaction decreased as the distance from the center increased. Dale and Weaver (1974) and Dawson et al. (1974) reported that studies on trails indicated compaction was prevalent in the trail treads. This compaction impact diminished with an increase in distance from the trail center (Ward and Berg, 1973; Dawson et al., 1974).

Dunn (1984) reported that compaction can be assessed by using four measurements: 1) bulk density, the mass per unit volume; 2) penetrability, the resistance to penetration; 3) infiltration, the absorption of water per unit time; and 4) soil moisture content, the amount of water occupying the soil pore space. Bulk density and infiltration will be discussed further.

### *Bulk Density*

Human foot traffic or trampling has been shown to increase bulk densities on recreation sites (Settergen and Cole, 1970; Trumbull et al., 1994). Monti and Mackintosh (1979) found severe compaction and high bulk densities on camping sites when compared to the control site. In comparing the bulk densities between the camping sites and the control site, they found a 34% increase in bulk densities over those of the control site. Dotzenko et al. (1967) found in a study of Rocky Mountain National Park campsites an increase ranging from 30 to 55% in bulk densities of the high use sites compared to those of the low use sites. Foth (1990) stated that this large increase in bulk densities due to camping activities was comparable to the compaction caused by tractors and heavy equipment.

In a study of the impacts of military camping on silt loam soils in the Ozark Mountains of Fort Leonard Wood, Missouri, Trumbull et al. (1994) compared high use, low use, and

no use (control site) camping sites. They found that bulk densities were significantly lower on the control site in comparison to the low use and high use sites, but there was no significant difference in bulk densities between the low use and high use sites (Trumbull et al., 1994).

### *Infiltration and Pore Space*

Infiltration is a measure of a recreational site's compaction. Trumbull et al. (1994) found that infiltration rates significantly decreased on recreational sites. Recreational use removed the litter layer, vegetative cover, and surface A horizon (Monti and Mackintosh, 1979; Dunn et al., 1980). The loss of the litter layer and vegetative cover, compaction, and subsequent erosion of the surface A horizon reduced water infiltration (Lutz, 1945; Brown et al., 1977; Ritter et al., 1995). Dunne and Leopold (1996) stated the decrease in vegetation due to changes in land use caused large differences in infiltration on similar soil types. Corresponding to the increased compaction present on the recreationally disturbed sites, Monti and Mackintosh (1979) found infiltration rates decreased 20 to 30 times over the infiltration rates on the control sites. Research on compacted, sandy loam and loamy sand soil plots in England showed a significant reduction in infiltration rates during heavy rains (Reed, 1983). Lutz (1945) reported from his studies in Connecticut state parks that recreational trampling reduced permeability of the upper 10 cm of soil by 6 times on sandy soils and 20 times on sandy loam soils when compared to the control sites. Recreational trampling reduced moisture in A horizons (0-30 cm depth) of both coarse and fine-textured

soils (Settergen and Cole, 1970). In clay soils, evaporation of ponded water led to the development of crusts that further reduced infiltration (Le Bissonnais and Arrouays, 1997).

On wet sites, trampling also reduced pore space and the availability of moisture (Dunn et al., 1980). In a study of marching impacts at the US Military Academy, Geohring et al. (1992) found that marching traffic on wet soils caused compaction of the soils. Compaction affected pore space directly by reducing the macropores, which in turn restricted air and water movement into the soil. For example, studies of the top 8 cm of Iowa campground soils indicated soil macropore space was 18% lower on campsites than on the control sites (Dawson et al., 1978).

Dunn et al. (1980) reported from a South Carolina study that trampling compressed the soil pore space, which restricted water and air movement. Compaction decreased the soil water holding capacity of Piedmont sandy loam soil campsites. Conversely, on South Carolina Sandhill and Coastal Region soils with many large macropores, compaction actually reduced the large macropores, which resulted in a higher soil water holding capacity on these campsites (Dunn et al., 1980).

As compaction increased, this reduction in aeration became a prime reason for the restriction of root elongation. Reduction of pore space also created a shortage of oxygen that can restrict the flow and diffusion of dissolved nutrients. Restriction of the flow and diffusion ultimately led to a difficulty in plant uptake of these dissolved nutrients (Dunn et al., 1980).

### *Texture, Organic Matter, and Soil Moisture*

The texture, organic matter content, exposure to rainfall, and soil moisture content of the soil are indicators of a soil's susceptibility to compaction (Reed, 1983). Coarse textured soils with low organic matter contents were more susceptible to compaction than high organic matter content soils with low initial bulk densities (Dunn, 1984). Further, Dotzenko et al. (1967) found in their Rocky Mountain National Park study that coarse textured soils with low organic matter contents compacted more than soils with higher organic matter contents and lower densities, due mostly to the large macropores in coarse textured soils. Additional reasons cited for the greater compaction of coarse textured soils included differences in ground cover and litter layers (Dotzenko et al., 1967). Interestingly, Stewart and Cameron (1992) found that small amounts of stones in the soil reduced the compaction rate by dispersing the trampling pressure.

Stewart and Cameron (1992) showed that trampling did not compact organic soils, but they also found that organic soils were not ideal for use as trails because of their low strength and high water content. When high organic matter content soils were trampled, the soils structurally degraded and became especially prone to erosion. Dotzenko et al. (1967) showed recreational use decreased organic matter content on soils in Rocky Mountain National Park. They reported that as organic matter content increased, the soil compaction decreased (Dotzenko et al., 1967). Trumbull et al. (1994) found a significant decrease between the control and high use recreational site in total organic carbon as well as an increase in the rock volume, which they attributed to the erosion of the upper soil horizons.

Soil moisture content was the primary indicator of a soil's susceptibility to compaction (Bayfield, 1973). Studies concluded that mineral soils were prone to compaction when wet due to the corresponding decrease in soil strength (Stewart and Cameron, 1992). Bayfield (1973) showed wet mineral soils in Scotland compacted more than dry organic topsoils. Studies by Dotzenko et al. (1967) showed soil moisture content decreased on sites compacted by recreational use. Dunn et al. (1980) cited the loss of litter layer and organic matter contributed significantly to the decrease in the percent soil moisture of recreational sites.

### *Soil Chemistry and Nutrient Availability*

Dunn et al. (1980) reported that soil compaction changed nutrient availability and reduced root penetration and soil aeration. The poor aeration due to trampling-induced compaction increased anaerobic microbial activity to such an extent that over-production of some essential micronutrients (e.g., iron and manganese) resulted in plant toxicity (Dunn et al., 1980). Studies by Young and Gilmore (1976) on Illinois campgrounds found recreational use caused increases in soil pH, nitrogen, phosphorous, potassium, calcium, and sodium concentrations. In plant communities, water and nitrogen (N) are usually limited in availability. The availability of nitrogen and water are crucial to successional recovery patterns and rates (Childress et al., 1999). McClendon (1997) stated that during succession, total N concentration typically increased, whereas available N concentration typically decreased. LaPage (1962) concluded that compaction was most prevalent in the upper 15 cm of soil, and other researchers found that roots were nearly absent in these upper 15 cm of soil on recreational sites (Settergen and Cole, 1970).

## *Soil Erosion*

Sites that had low infiltration rates, reduced vegetation, and a minimal litter layer were susceptible to soil erosion (Monti and Mackintosh, 1979; Trumbull et al., 1994). Settergren and Cole (1970) also found that recreational sites were subject to sheet erosion due to decreased vegetation and litter cover. Morgan (1995) defined soil erosion as involving two processes: particle detachment from the soil mass, and the movement of these detached soil particles by erosive agents (e.g., moving water and wind). On sites unaffected by recreation, erosive processes were diminished because detachment was reduced by: 1) vegetation intercepting raindrops before striking the surface; 2) the litter layer serving as a protective mat; and 3) roots binding together soil particles (Trumbull et al., 1994; Ritter et al., 1995).

The litter layer was crucial in determining a site's susceptibility to compaction and erosion (Trumbull et al., 1994) because the litter layer and the A horizon served to incorporate the organic matter and retain moisture (Dunn, 1984). Further, the litter layer served as a protective mat by shielding against the negative impacts of human foot traffic. Dunn et al. (1980) reported trampling reduced vegetation and litter cover, leading to erosion, which further removed organic matter and soil of the A horizon. LaPage (1967) reported ground cover loss on silt loam soils was accelerated by human kicking of loose gravel. On sites used for camping, for example, Young (1978) determined from studies on Illinois campgrounds that the litter layer decreased by 71% and bare ground increased by 56% when compared to the control site. Trumbull et al. (1994) reported that recreational sites lost between 28 to 61 cm of soil due to erosion. Bare ground, or the lack of

vegetation and ground cover, proved to be the foremost factor contributing to soil erosion (Hofmann and Ries, 1991). Dunn et al. (1980) reported a significant decrease in the depth of the litter layer and A horizon of the recreational site when compared to the undisturbed control site. With the loss of litter layer and vegetative cover, finer soil particles were eroded by wind forces (Lutz, 1945). Furthermore, a decrease in organic matter content resulted in erosion, runoff, and crusting (Le Bissonnais and Arrouays, 1997).

### *Vegetative Patterns*

Vegetation on recreational sites can be impacted when roots are exposed by erosion (Cole, 1982). This exposure then impaired root function, thus creating a hostile environment for plant regeneration (Dunn et al., 1980). Dunn et al. (1980) also reported that during the first year of recreational use the rate of vegetative cover loss rapidly increased, but this rate of vegetative cover loss leveled off during subsequent years of recreational use. Dunn and Carroll (1985) found recreational use decreased vegetation and litter by 56% and the species composition by 25% in comparison to the control site.

Studies on campsites in Michigan found that trampling affected grasses less than broad-leaved species, and that ground cover survived better in partial shade due to the lack of sun to reduce ground moisture (Wagar, 1964). Yorks et al. (1997) reported grasses were most resistant to recreational trampling, forbs suffered immediate losses following recreational use, and trees and shrubs decreased in long term diversity following recreational trampling. They ranked the lifeforms from highest resistance to lowest resistance: grasses, trees, forbs, and then shrubs. Cole (1995a) reported that recreational sites with shrubs as the

predominant vegetative type sustained more damage and took longer to recover than sites with forbs as the predominant vegetative type. Trees were the least affected by trampling (Lutz, 1945; Brown et al., 1977; Cole, 1982). Tree seedlings, however, were typically eliminated by trampling, which reduced the likelihood of natural reproduction replacing mature trees on recreational sites. Although tree height growth was not curtailed by trampling, diameter growth was reduced (LaPage, 1962). Brown et al. (1977) reported, however, from studies on glacial till soils in Rhode Island, that both tree height and diameter decreased on recreational sites. Trumbull et al. (1994) found that, of the numerous impacts on vegetative growth, woody stem density was the most sensitive. They also concluded that canopy cover was practically indistinguishable between the control and impacted sites.

Cole (1995b) found in a study of four mountainous regions across the U.S. that the shoe type as well as the weight of the trampler can adversely impact vegetative cover and height. He reported, though dependent on vegetation type, that lug-soled boots caused moderately more vegetative cover loss than running shoes. Even one year after the recreational trampling, the vegetative cover loss was still present but the difference in vegetative cover loss due to shoe type was no longer evident. This impact from shoe type affected vegetative cover loss more than vegetative height. Moreover, he also found that with low trampling intensities (i.e., number of passes across a recreational site), heavy trampers caused more vegetative loss than light trampers did. Regardless of vegetation type, the heavier trampler also impacted the vegetative height more than the vegetative cover. This

reduction of the vegetative height proved even more apparent one year after the recreational trampling than immediately following the trampling (Cole, 1995b).

Recreational use does not uniformly denude vegetation across campsites. Dunn and Carroll (1985) found that the centers of campsites were most denuded of vegetation and litter. This vegetation only recovered outside of a 7 m radius from the center of the camp site. Cole (1995a) concluded from his research that overall damage to vegetation resulting from recreational use can be minimized by restricting the camping to a few sites rather than spreading it out across several sites.

### *Site Ecology*

The ecosystems studied by Dunn et al. (1980) advanced through complex successional stages resulting from many interacting ecological processes. As these ecosystems were used for recreation, these ecological processes were modified. Therefore, recreational use has been considered a disturbance to the ecology of a site. White and Pickett (1985) defined disturbance as: "... any relatively discrete event in time that disrupts ecosystem, community, or population structure and changes resource or substrate availability or the physical environment."

Dunn et al. (1980) argued that successional ecology was affected by the clearing of vegetation during recreational site construction and that resulted in an earlier seral stage plant community. During construction of recreational sites, the removal of trees and ground vegetation increased the amount of radiation and moisture, which reached the surface (Dunn, 1984). In addition, the disturbance of the soil created conditions that

allowed invaders to take hold. This new recreational use created by the construction had three effects: 1) trampling of vegetation through foot traffic and mechanical damage; 2) kicking up gravel or rocks, which can further damage vegetation; and 3) vandalism of trees. Together, these effects induced decay, disease, and increased competition among the plants on the site (Dunn, 1984). Dawson et al. (1978) found in their Iowa campground study that following a camping induced-disturbance, native vegetation was pushed out by trample-tolerant plants or replaced altogether by bare ground. In addition, Dunn and Carroll (1985) stated that a rapid decline of ground cover occurred over the first year of recreational use. This rate of decline leveled off after a couple of years of use and more drought resistant species invaded the site. This reduced competition encouraged the growth of the invaders, changing the community composition of the recreational site.

### *Summary*

In conclusion, recreational impacts on soils, predominantly restricted to the litter layer and surface mineral horizon, have been studied over several decades employing three primary methods of analysis: comparative, longitudinal, and simulation. These previous studies across several different soil types indicated that compaction as well as numerous other consequences resulted directly from recreation. These other consequences included: increases in soil erosion and root exposure; decreases in soil moisture content, infiltration rate, soil water holding capacity, soil aeration, litter layer and surface horizon depth, organic matter content, root penetration and growth, and vegetative growth; changes in nutrient availability and the successional ecology of the recreational site.

## **Material and Methods**

### *Location*

The research area was located in Jack's Valley Training Area (JVTA) at the United States Air Force Academy (USAFA). ENSR (1997) reported that the United States Air Force Academy is bordered on the east by Monument Creek and Interstate 25, on the west by the Rampart Range in the Pike National Forest, on the south by Colorado Springs, and on the north by sparsely developed, but ever growing, unincorporated El Paso County, Colorado (Figure 1). The United States Air Force Academy totals 7500 ha, whereas JVTA includes approximately 900 ha, 12% of the total area of USAFA. Jack's Valley is situated on the northern edge of USAFA (Figure 2). The elevation of Jack's Valley ranges from 2035 to 2200 m, and the elevation of research area ranges from 2040 and 2050 m.

### *Field Sites*

Three field sites were used in the JVTA research area sampling: a low use site (reference site), a moderate use site (test site), and a heavy use site (test site) (Figure 3). During the first visit to the Academy in mid-May 1998, the research area was selected based on whether a suitable reference site existed to which the training sites could be compared. This research project assessed the impacts of the cadet training activities on the high and moderate use test sites and compared the impacts to the low use reference site (an entirely undisturbed, control site with similar slope, soils, aspect, and elevation did not immediately exist in JVTA; therefore, this low use site was accepted as the reference site to which the 2

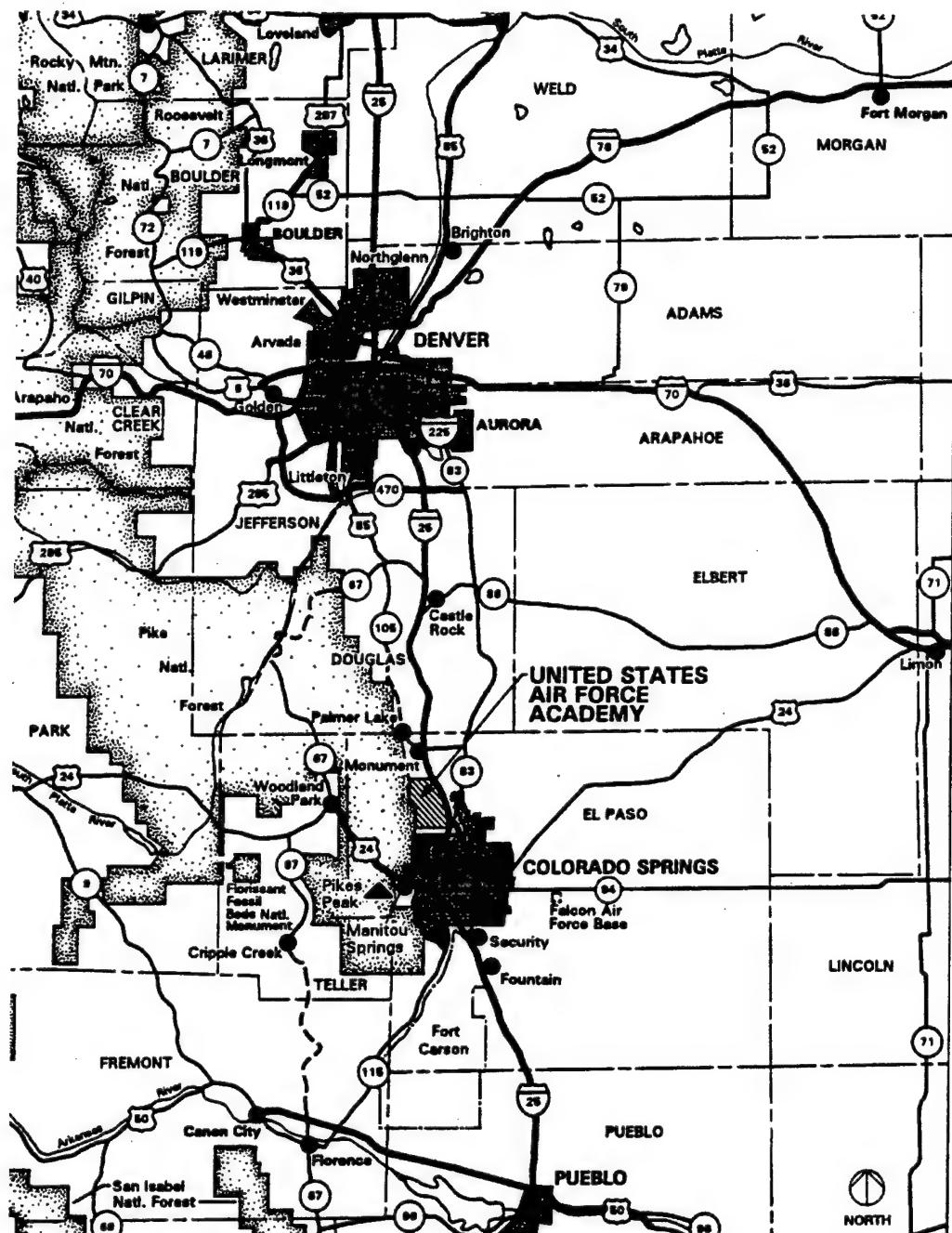
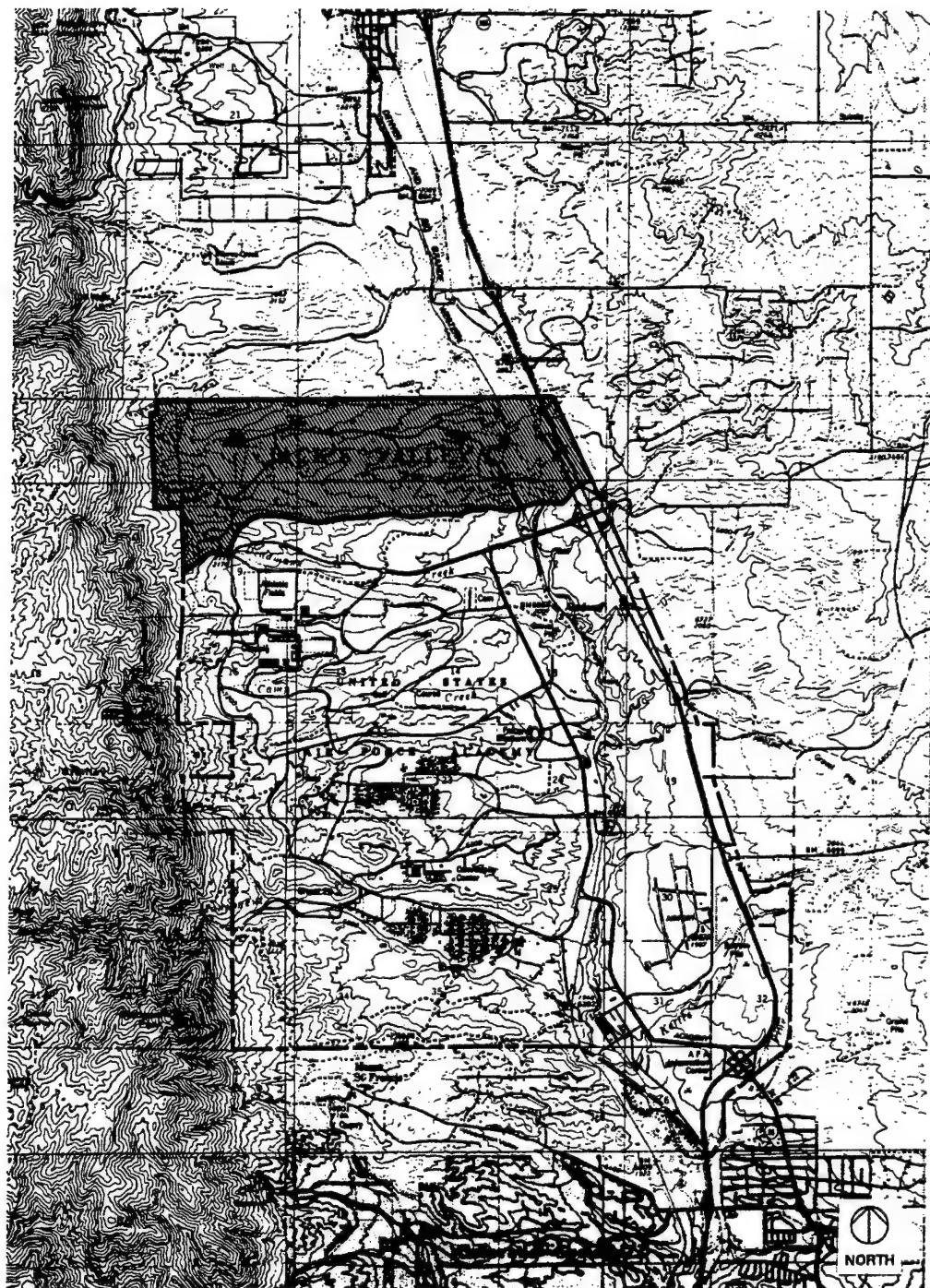


Figure 1. Map of the central Colorado region showing the United States Air Force Academy north of the city of Colorado Springs.



**Figure 2. Map of the United States Air Force Academy showing Jack's Valley Training Area at the Academy's northern boundary (shaded).**

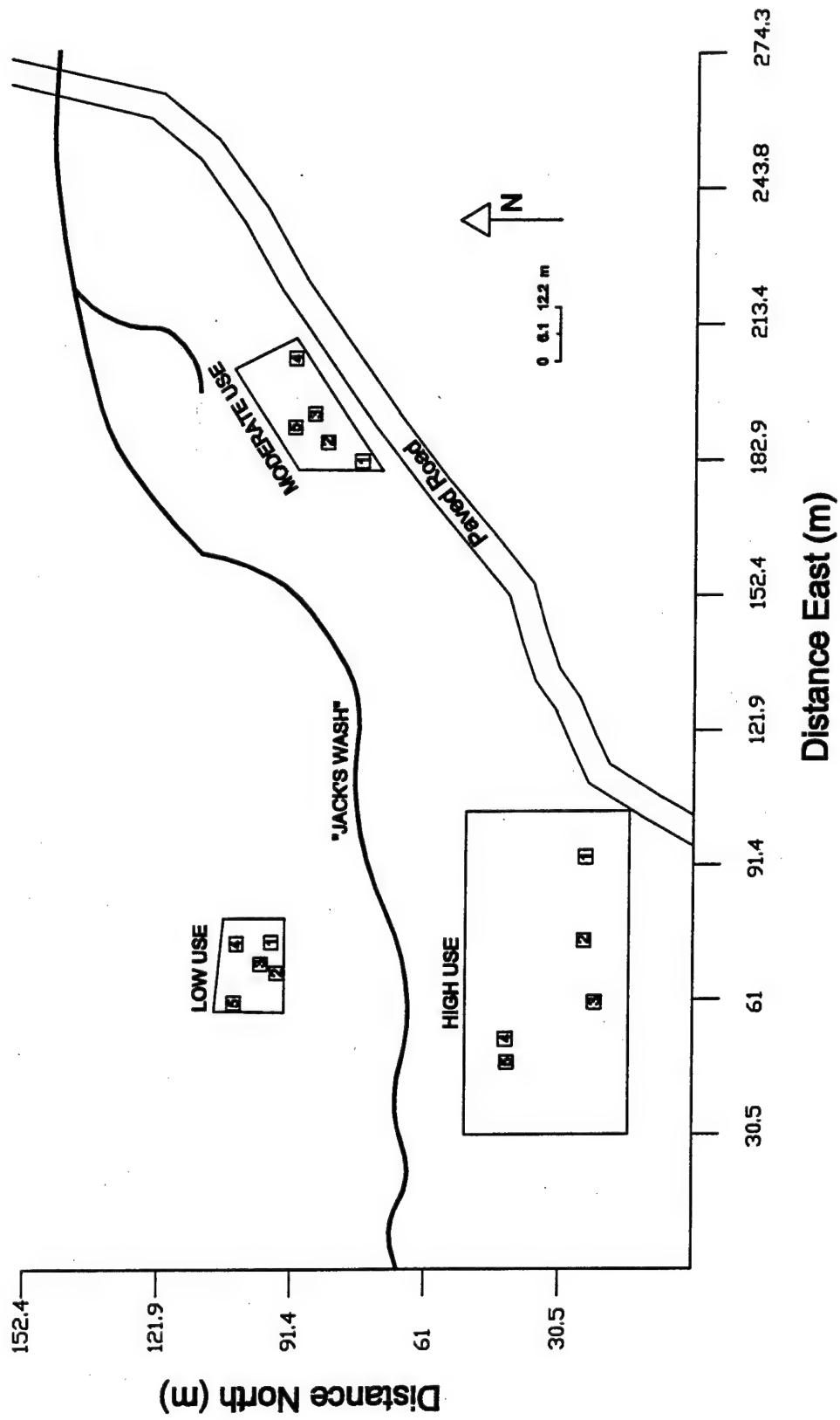


Figure 3. Map of the Research Area at Jack's Valley Training Area. The 3 study sites are labeled as low use (reference), moderate use, and the high use. The 5 subsamples within each site are numbered.

test sites could be compared). The reference site was located outside of the main basic cadet training encampment area whereas the test sites were located in this main training encampment area. The test sites and the reference site were similar to each other in terms of vegetation, soils, slope, and aspect (the aspects of the test sites differed from the aspect of the reference site, but due to the minimal grade of the slopes (<2%), the differing aspect factor was not thought to have any effect). This allowed for the comparison of the effects of cadet and other training disturbance on the soil and vegetative properties.

### *Climate*

The climate of the area is characterized by warm summers and cold winters (Larsen, 1981; Moore, 1992). The annual average daily temperature is 9.4 °C with an average daily minimum of -7.8 °C in the winter and an average daily maximum of 27.8 °C in the summer. The majority of precipitation occurs in thunderstorms during the warm period; annual average precipitation is 40 cm. Snowstorms are frequent during the winters. Average annual snowfall varies with elevation but ranges from 106 cm at lower elevations to 183 cm at higher elevations.

### *Plant Communities*

Jack's Valley Training Area includes 7 primary plant communities: ponderosa pine woodland, ponderosa pine-Gambel oak woodland, Gambel oak shrubland, little bluestem-blue grama grassland, smooth brome grassland, early-seral annuals/bare ground, and riparian

edge along Monument Creek (McClendon and Childress, 1997). The research area, though made up all of grassland communities, did not easily fit into these primary plant communities due to the training disturbances having induced successional diversity. The low use site contains native grassland and community type, *Stipa-Koeleria* species. The moderate use site contains early to mid-seral stage grassland/bare ground and a community type, *Stipa-Koeleria* species. The center of the high use site contains an early-seral stage grassland/bare ground and a community type, *Bromus* species. The edges of the high use site contain early to mid-seral stage grassland/bare ground and a community type, *Stipa* species.

### *Soils*

The soils found on the research area are predominantly from the Pring series (coarse-loamy, mixed Aridic Haploborolls) but may also include to a minor extent soils from the Tomah series (coarse-loamy, mixed Boralfic Argiborolls) (Larsen, 1981). The research area was mapped as Pring sandy loam although a few of the research plots had a loamy sand surface texture as does the Tomah series. Pring and Tomah soils are part of the soil association commonly found on cold, semiarid foothills of the Rocky Mountains to include fans, terraces, ridges, and side slopes. The soils are primarily deep, nearly level to slightly sloping, well-drained soils that formed in material weathered from arkosic sedimentary rock (Larsen, 1981). Monroe and Wicander (1992) defined arkosic rock as sandstone having a feldspar content of at least 25%.

A typical Pring pedon has an A horizon with a dark grayish brown to brown color, coarse sandy loam texture, and a thickness of up to 25 cm; an AC horizon with a light

grayish brown color, sandy loam texture, and a thickness of up to 25 cm; and a C horizon with a light gray, coarse sandy loam texture, and a thickness of 110 cm (Larsen et al., 1981; USDA, 1990). The depth to the bedrock is approximately 140-150 cm. The solum, the upper horizons of the soil where soil processes and biotic activities are most active, of a Pring soil ranges in thickness from 25 to 50 cm. The permeability of the Pring soil is defined as rapid, the soil water holding capacity is described as medium, and surface runoff and the erosion hazard are both classified as moderate. Suitable land uses on the Pring soil include: homesites, rangeland, wildlife habitat, and recreation.

Included in the Pring series mapping unit is the Tomah series. A typical Tomah pedon has an A horizon with a dark grayish brown to light gray color, loamy sand texture and a thickness of up to 56 cm; a Bt horizon with a yellowish brown color, loamy sand texture and a thickness of 66 cm; and a C horizon with a pale brown color, loamy sand texture and a thickness of 30 cm. The depth to the bedrock is approximately 140-150 cm. The solum of a Tomah soil ranges in thickness from 100 to 150 cm. The permeability of the Tomah soil is defined as moderately rapid; surface runoff is described as slow; the erosion hazard is classified as slight to moderate; and the soil water holding capacity is considered moderate. Suitable land uses on the Tomah soil include: homesites, rangeland, and wildlife habitat. Moderate to severe limitations exist for recreational use (Larsen, 1981; USDA, 1991).

### *Research Area*

The research area at Jack's Valley Training Area is used primarily for a 16-day, basic cadet training field encampment during the summer months (Figure 3). In addition, JVTA is

used year round by United States Air Force Academy cadets, Army units from Fort Carson, Air Force Reserve, Air National Guard, Reserve Officer Training Corps cadets, federal, state and local law enforcement agencies, and local organizations like the Boy Scouts of America for physical training, orienteering, and combat arms training. The high use site is used for physical training and camping. This research area training usage information is based on USDI (1997), ENSR (1997), and personal conversations with J. Kellar, G. Gallogly, and Staff Sergeant J. Ingwersoll (USAFA personnel) during the initial research area visit in May 1998.

#### *Low Use Site*

The low use reference site was located across an intermittent stream from the high and moderate use sites. The intermittent stream was blocked upstream by earthen dam designed for soil conservation purposes. Due to this physical separation, the low use reference site has recently experienced much less training activity than the test sites. Because of this increased seclusion, mammal activity is much higher on the reference site. Evidence of this increased mammal activity is the gopher midden strewn across the site. Deer frequently graze on the site. Historically, the low use site was plowed and farmed in the early 1900s, but this practice was soon discontinued due to the erosivity of the soils. Following the failed attempts at farming, the site was used primarily for grazing until the Academy was established in 1954. The slope of this site was gently sloping, 0-2% grade.

### *Moderate Use Site*

The moderate use site was located downslope and near the high use site. Since 1996 it has been used mostly during July for the 16-day basic cadet training encampment period for physical training and some marching activities. Recently a truck conducted a U-turn across the site and left a noticeably compacted tire tread scar (note: soil sampling did not take place in this tire tread scar). Deer frequently graze on the site during periods of inactivity. Historically, this moderate use site was plowed and farmed in the early 1900s, but this practice was soon discontinued due to the erosivity of the soils. Following the failed attempts at farming, the site was used primarily for grazing until the Academy was established in 1954. The slope of this site was gently sloping, 0-1% grade.

### *High Use Site*

The high use site has only been intensively used since 1996 for a 16-day period during July for basic cadet training encampment. This encampment supports 38 tents and approximately 450 cadets. In addition, over the rest of the year, but primarily during the summer months, the high use site has been used for 10-12 overnight encampments and many associated field exercises. Cadets have camped, marched, undertaken physical training, and filled sandbags on this site as well. As on the moderate use site, deer frequently graze on the site during periods of inactivity. As with the low and moderate use sites, the high use site also was plowed and farmed in the early 1900s, but this practice was soon discontinued due to the erosivity of the soils. Following the failed attempts at farming,

the high use site was used primarily for grazing until the Academy was established in 1954.

The slope of this site was gently sloping, 0-1% grade.

### *Research Area Layout*

The research area was surveyed using a total station surveying instrument to find the sampling locations at a later time. Within each of the 3 sites, five plots (approximately 3 m by 3 m) were randomly selected. The southwestern corner of each plot was sited using the total station. The other corners of the plot were then measured out by hand from the southwestern corner of the plot using a compass, an "L" square, and 3 measuring cords.

### *Experimental Design*

Plant biomass, litter, and the following soil physical and chemical properties were measured: bulk density, texture, infiltration rate, total C concentration, total N concentration, and soil water holding capacity. Samples were collected for texture, total C concentration, and total N concentration in each site at 3 depths of: 0-5, 5-10, and 10-20 cm. The sandy texture and lack of soil cohesiveness prevented the soil core method from being employed, so bulk density and soil water holding capacity samples were collected with a double-cylinder, hammer-driven core sampler at a depth of only 0-6 cm.

Core samples at 5 randomly selected sampling locations within each plot were collected at each sampling depth for measurement of texture, total C, and total N. Due to the breakage of the 2-cm, small diameter sampling tube in the field, it was only used on the high

use site and part of the moderate use site, whereas a 3-cm, large diameter core was used on the remainder of the moderate use site and the low use site. Samples were collected in the same sampling locations for bulk density. Soil water holding capacity was determined on 2 of the 5 sampling locations at each site. Bulk density samples were collected again during a second trip later that summer following the 16-day basic cadet training encampment. Each core sample (for texture, total C, and total N) at a given depth collected within the plot was later combined in the laboratory to reduce variability due to the heterogeneity within the plot. Seventy-five core samples were collected for texture, total C, and total N; 75 double-cylinder, hammer-driven cores were collected to a depth of 6 cm for bulk density (both pre-encampment and post-encampment); 30 double-cylinder, hammer-driven cores were also collected at a depth of 6 cm for soil water holding capacity; and 18 infiltration rate trials were conducted (6 per site).

### *Soil Preparation*

Soil preparation procedures for texture, total C, and total N analyses were described by USEPA (1990). First, samples were dried on PVC tables and heavy nylon mesh (drying was not conducted on bulk density or soil water holding capacity samples). Once air-dried, samples were disaggregated, ground by a rolling pin, and sieved over kraft paper sheets. After sieving, the samples were then subsampled prior to the analysis in order to obtain a representative volume of soil.

### *Bulk Density*

Soil compaction was assessed as a function of bulk density. Blake and Hartge (1984) defined bulk density as the mass of the dry soil solids per soil bulk volume (which included the volume of the pore space as well as the volume of the soil solids). Bulk density was determined by the double-cylinder, hammer-driven core method. A cylindrical metal core sampler with an internal brass ring was driven into the soil to a 6 cm depth. In the laboratory, the sample was weighed and then oven-dried at 105 °C overnight to achieve a constant weight. The oven-dry mass was divided by the sample volume to give a bulk density (Blake and Hartge, 1984). This procedure was undertaken twice: once before the third, 16-day basic cadet training encampment (pre-encampment) and once following the third, 16-day basic cadet training encampment (post-encampment).

### *Infiltration*

Infiltration rate was measured using a single-ring cylinder infiltrometer. Infiltration rate was defined by Bouwer (1986) as the volume flux of water moving into the soil surface per unit area. Two repetitions were conducted in the first plot of each site to standardize the techniques across the sites and to ensure leakage was not occurring; otherwise, one repetition of the experiment was conducted within each plot. Litter and vegetative cover were recorded prior to placement of infiltrometer. The cylinder infiltrometer, which had a 12-cm diameter and a 12-cm height, was carefully placed into the soil to an approximate depth of 3 cm. The cylinder was flooded with water to saturate the soil. Burlap was placed

over the soil surface before water was poured into the infiltrometer to prevent disturbance of the soil. The rate at which the water was absorbed into the soil was determined by maintaining a constant depth of water within the infiltrometer and recording the time (USDA, 1998).

### *Texture*

Texture, the relative proportion of sand, silt, and clay was determined by particle-size analysis using a hydrometer (Gee and Bauder, 1986). Percent clay was determined using the hydrometer; percent gravel and sand were determined by sieving dispersed soil (after clay measurement) through a 0.053 mm (270 mesh) sieve and weighing oven-dried material; and percent silt by the difference. An ultrasonic sieve device was used to determine different sand sizes.

### *Soil Water Holding Capacity*

Soil water holding capacity, which was assessed as a measure of the availability of water for plant uptake, was measured using the pressure plate method. Pressure was applied to a soil sample placed on a porous pressure plate at 0.10, 0.33, or 15.0 bars of pressure. Each sample was subsampled, placed in a rubber retaining ring, on the appropriate pressure plate, saturated overnight, equilibrated in the pressure plate apparatus overnight at the corresponding pressure, weighed, oven-dried at 105 °C overnight, and then weighed again. Field capacity represented the amount of water retained by a soil when subjected to a water

pressure less than 0.33 bars (both 0.10 and 0.33 bars in this experiment) whereas the permanent wilting point represented the amount of water retained by a soil when subjected to 15 bars of pressure (Klute, 1986).

### *Soil Total Carbon and Nitrogen Analysis*

After initial soil preparation was completed at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, samples were sent to the Colorado State University Soil Testing Laboratory for total C and total N analysis. Total C and N concentrations in soil samples were determined using an elemental analyzer. The soil sample was oxidized in the analyzer at a temperature greater than 1000 °C. The amounts of gases, CO<sub>2</sub> and N<sub>2</sub>, produced from the reaction were then quantified by infrared spectroscopy (USEPA, 1990). Simple linear regression was run to determine if total carbon concentration was related to total nitrogen concentration. If a relationship between total carbon and nitrogen concentrations existed, then the carbon present in the soil was assumed to be in an organic form.

### *Plant Biomass and Litter*

Under the direction of Dr. McClendon's research team, plant biomass and litter samples were collected across the research area. Four, 10 x 10 m plots were established in the research area to capture the differing grassland communities and intensities of use: a high use plot in the center of basic cadet training encampment area, another high use plot at the edge of encampment area, a plot within the moderate use site, and a plot within the low use

site. Two quadrats (each 0.5 m<sup>2</sup>) were randomly placed across each of the 5 transects within a plot. The vegetation was identified, clipped, composited by species, oven-dried at 50 °C overnight to achieve a constant weight, and then weighed to determine the species-specific biomass (g m<sup>-2</sup>) within each quadrat. Litter was also collected within each quadrat, oven-dried at 50 °C, and weighed. Vegetative species and litter samples across each plot were composited. The appropriate lifeforms of the species were later identified to compare the effects of the basic cadet training activities on the lifeforms.

### *Soil Erosion*

The Universal Soil Loss Equation (USLE) was used to estimate rates of soil erosion occurring on the research area. USLE is defined as  $A=R \times K \times L \times S \times C \times P$ , where A is the gross erosion rate, R is the rainfall erosivity factor, K is soil erodibility factor, L is the slope-length factor, S is the slope-steepness factor, C is the vegetation factor, and P is the conservation management factor (Wischmeier and Smith, 1960). The USLE factors were determined for each plot based on the measured soil properties collected at the research area (e.g., K, L, and S) or obtained from U.S. Department of Agriculture (1994) for local values (e.g., R, C, and P). A standardized plot size of 1 ha was used in computing the gross erosion rate, A.

### *Data Analysis and Interpretation*

Using the SAS statistical package, one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) with subsampling and Tukey's studentized range tests were conducted on the measured properties. Statistical significance for ANOVA and mean separation was determined using a p-value of 0.05. The design of the ANOVA included a dependent variable (e.g., one of the measured properties: bulk density, texture, infiltration rate, soil water holding capacity, total C, total N, the ratio of total C to total N, and total aboveground biomass) and one of two independent variables (disturbance or depth). The statistical analysis was used to assess the impacts of the basic cadet training encampment and other training on the potential for soil erosion occurring on these training sites. The results were then passed on to Dr. McClendon's research team for application in the EDYS model as a portion of the data used to calculate the carrying capacity of Jack's Valley Training Area.

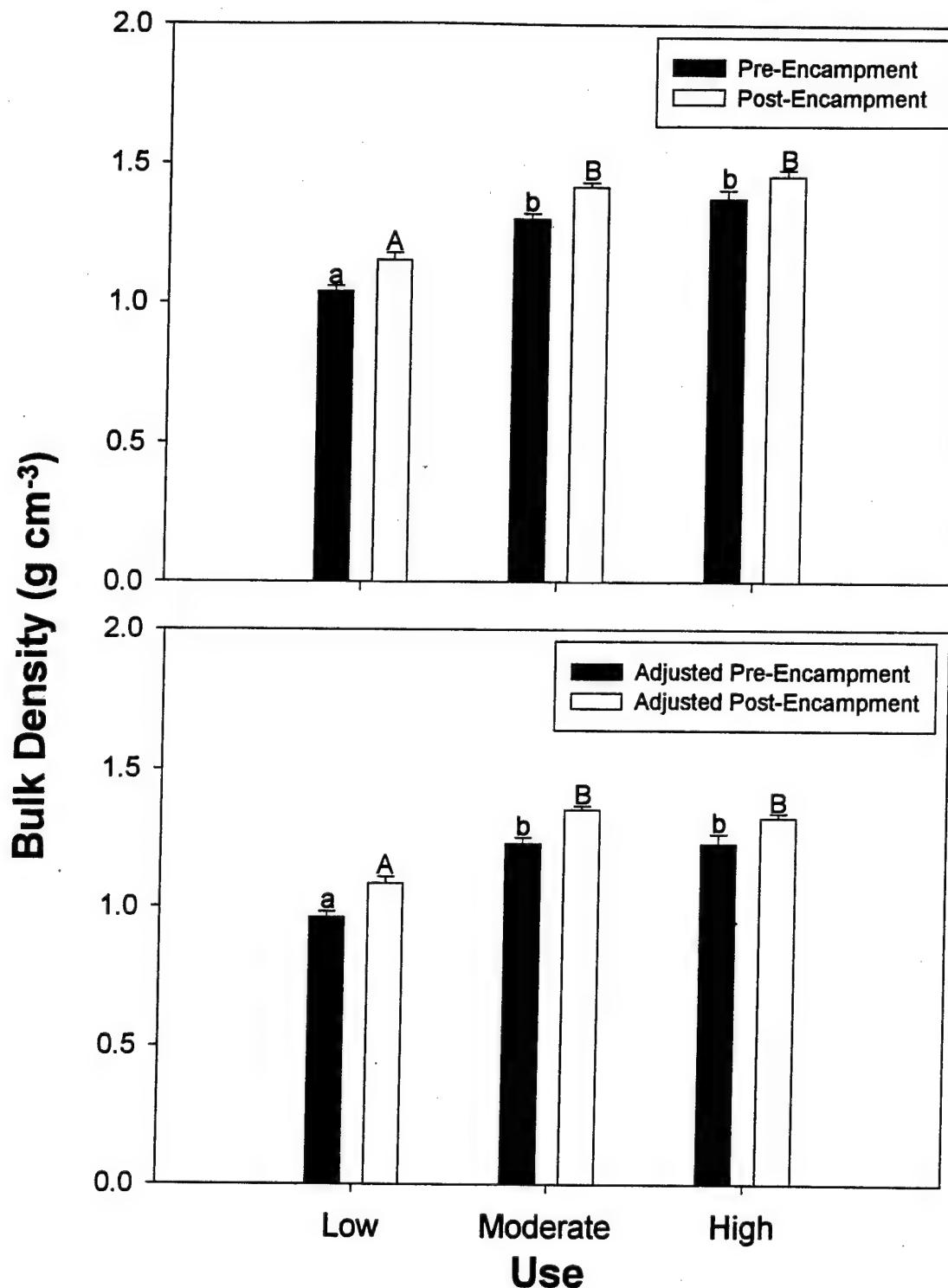
## Results and Discussion

### *Bulk Density*

During July of 1996, 1997, and 1998 the research area had been used for a 16-day basic cadet training encampment, with other less intensive training use occurring throughout the year. Bulk density samples were collected in May-June 1998 prior to the July 1998 basic cadet training encampment (pre-encampment samples) and in August 1998 following the July basic cadet training encampment (post-encampment samples).

The pre-encampment samples were compared to determine whether the amount of site usage affected the bulk density. The low use site had a mean bulk density of  $1.04 \text{ g cm}^{-3}$ , which was significantly lower than the bulk densities of the moderate use site (mean bulk density,  $1.30 \text{ g cm}^{-3}$ ) and the high use site (mean bulk density,  $1.37 \text{ g cm}^{-3}$ ) (Figure 4). The bulk densities of the high and moderate use sites were not significantly different. These results are similar to findings of Monti and Mackintosh (1979) and Trumbull et al. (1994) that camping increases soil bulk densities. Trumbull et al. (1994) likewise found no significant differences between the bulk densities on low use and high use campsites. Although the use categories are subjective, it is safe to assume Trumbull et al.'s (1994) application of the low use definition is comparable to our moderate use site and their control is similar to our low use site (our reference).

A high use plot with one of the higher pre-encampment mean bulk densities, H-2, located in the center of the basic cadet training encampment area (Figure 3), had a mean bulk density of  $1.46 \text{ g cm}^{-3}$ . The highest bulk densities were found in the center of the basic cadet training



**Figure 4.** Pre- and post-encampment mean soil bulk densities and adjusted soil bulk densities (with standard errors,  $n=25$ , and adjusted for coarse fragments) for grassland soils at the United States Air Force Academy Jack's Valley Training Area based on intensity of use. Means with same letter and case style are not significantly different ( $p>0.05$ ).

encampment area, which was also what Cole (1982) found. One low use plot with a lower pre-encampment mean bulk density, L-3, had a mean bulk density of  $1.02 \text{ g cm}^{-3}$ . Both plots had a sandy loam soil texture. This high use plot had a pre-encampment mean bulk density 30% greater than the pre-encampment mean bulk density of the low use plot. Dotzenko et al. (1967) found mean bulk density differences between high and low use campsites ranged from 30 to 55% whereas Monti and Mackintosh (1979) found a 34% difference. Dotzenko et al.'s study occurred on high use campsites which had experienced intensive camping use for over 30 years, whereas the high use plot studied here had experienced only 3 years of intensive camping use. The 30% difference in mean bulk densities between high and low use plots measured on at the Jack's Valley research area compared to the low end of the increase Dotzenko et al. (1967) measured at Rocky Mountain National Park.

The post-encampment samples were also compared to determine if site usage over the 16-day basic cadet training encampment affected bulk densities. For the post-encampment samples, the low use site had a mean bulk density of  $1.15 \text{ g cm}^{-3}$ , which was significantly lower than the bulk densities of both the moderate use site (mean bulk density,  $1.42 \text{ g cm}^{-3}$ ) and the high use site (mean bulk density,  $1.46 \text{ g cm}^{-3}$ ). The bulk densities of the high and moderate use sites were not significantly different. The post-encampment results also concurred with past research findings of camping increasing bulk densities (Monti and Mackintosh, 1979; Trumbull et al., 1994). The lack of significant difference between both the pre-encampment and the post-encampment moderate use site and high use site mean bulk densities indicates that even a small amount of use (i.e., moderate use site) equally degraded a training site as much as a large amount of use (i.e., high use site).

The same high use plot discussed earlier, H-2, had a post-encampment mean bulk density of  $1.50 \text{ g cm}^{-3}$ . The low use plot, L-3, had a post-encampment mean bulk density of  $1.08 \text{ g cm}^{-3}$ . This high use plot had a post-encampment mean bulk density 28% greater than the post-encampment mean bulk density of the low use plot.

To assess whether site usage during the 16-day basic cadet training further affected soil bulk densities, the pre-encampment and post-encampment bulk densities were compared. A t-test indicated that the pre-encampment bulk densities for each of the site usage classes were significantly different from the post-encampment bulk densities. These results indicate that the 16-day basic cadet training encampment activities further increased the bulk densities on all 3 sites. In an ideal experimental design, the reference site would have been undisturbed. The low use reference site in this research project, however, was subjected to a small amount of training use during the third basic cadet training encampment, which could explain the increase in the mean bulk density on the reference site.

To discount any variation in bulk densities due to coarse fragment content of the soil, the coarse fragment content of each sample was subtracted and an adjusted bulk density was then calculated (Figure 4). The statistical analysis indicated that when adjustments were made for coarse fragment contents the low use adjusted bulk densities were significantly different from the moderate and high use adjusted bulk densities for both pre- and post-encampment samples. In addition, the pre-encampment adjusted bulk densities were still found to be significantly different from post-encampment adjusted bulk densities. Therefore, there was not any effect due to the differing coarse fragment contents of the two

soil types, and basic cadet training encampment activities did increase bulk density and compaction on the sites.

### *Texture*

Soil texture is a crucial indicator of a soil's susceptibility to compaction (Reed, 1983). Representative soil samples for each of the 3 depths (0-5, 5-10, and 10-20 cm) were analyzed by particles size analysis to determine the grassland soil surface textures across the research area (Figure 5). The texture of the soils in the plots at the high use site was sandy loam, which is the same texture as the surface horizon of the Pring soil (Larsen, 1981). Three of the 5 plots within the moderate use site are the sandy loam soil, whereas, the remaining 2 plots are loamy sand soils, which is the same texture as the surface horizon of the Tomah soil (Larsen, 1981). Tomah soil is hypothesized to be an inclusion in the Pring soils of the grassland research area as mapped by Larsen (1981). For the low use site, 3 of the 5 plots are the sandy loam soil, whereas, the remaining 2 plots are the loamy sand soil. Although there was a little variation in the soil textures across the research area, analysis indicated no significant effect.

The clay content was determined as part of the particle size analysis procedure. Site usages were compared by clay content to determine whether clay content was related to the increased bulk density using ANOVA and Tukey's studentized range tests. The difference in clay contents between the different site usages was not significant. The site usages were also compared by coarse fragment content. The difference in coarse fragment contents between the different site usages was also not significant. Therefore, effects on increased bulk densities due to the clay content and due to the coarse fragment content were not found.

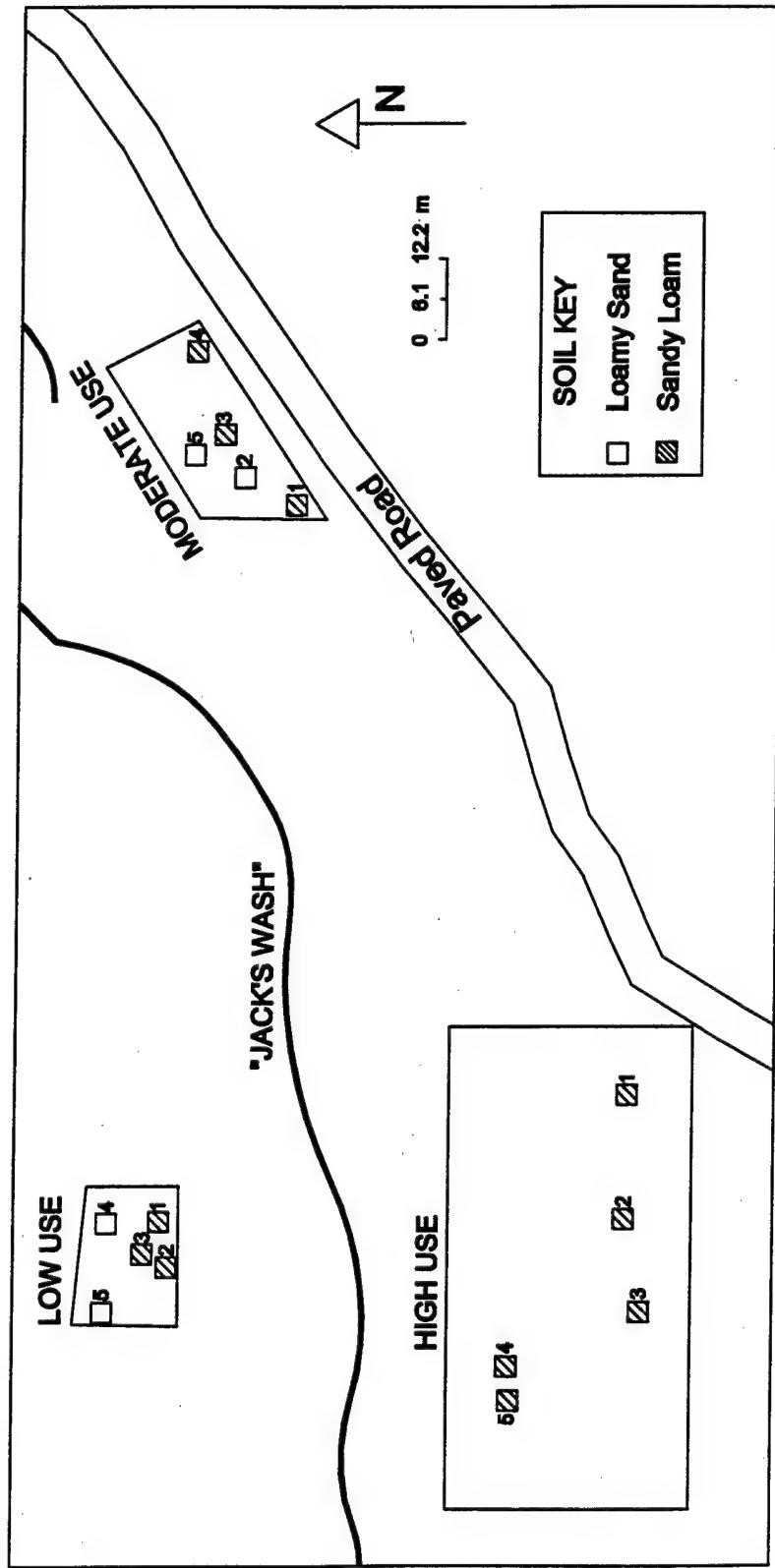


Figure 5. Map of soil surface textures across the grassland soil research area at the United States Air Force Academy Jack's Valley Training Area based on particle size analysis results.

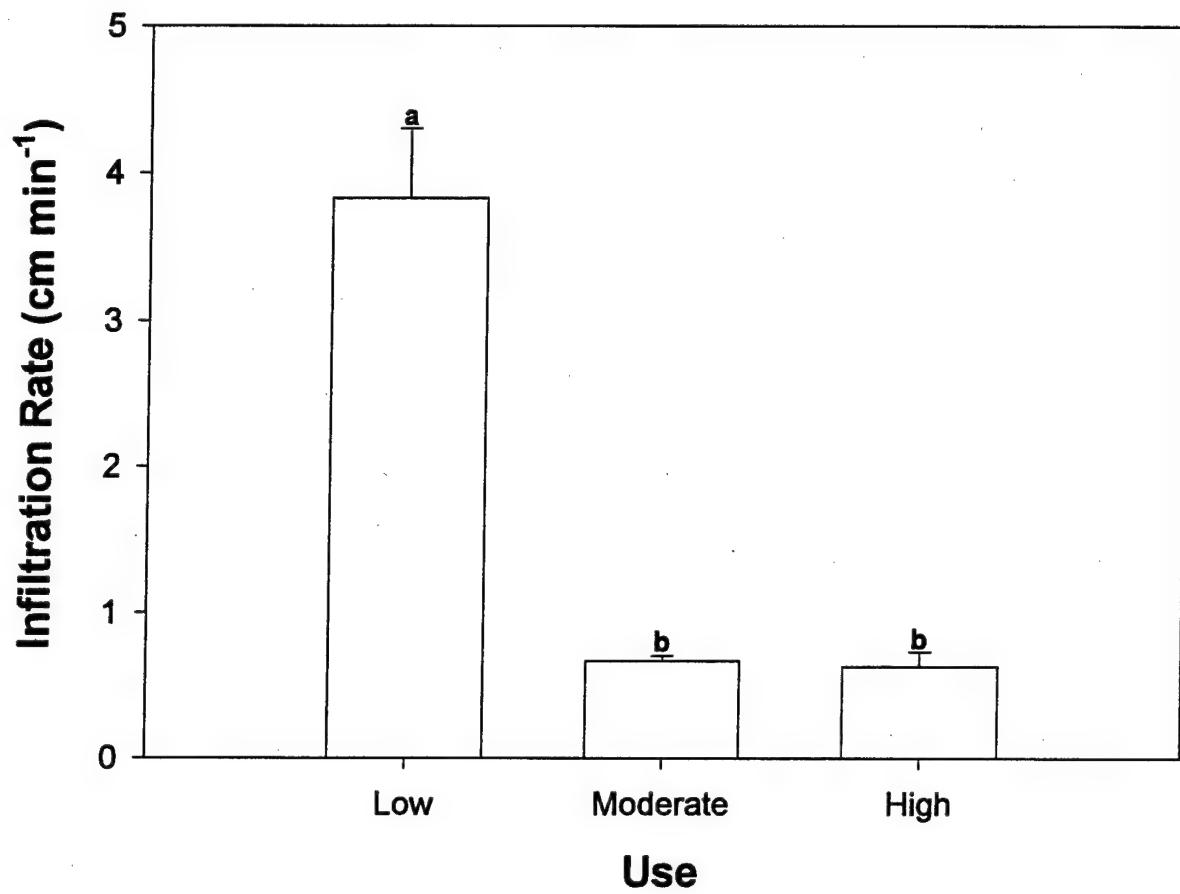
### *Infiltration*

Infiltration, as with bulk density, is a measure of compaction. Infiltration rates were measured across the research area. Infiltration rates at the low use site (mean rate,  $3.83 \text{ cm min}^{-1}$ ) were significantly higher than the rates at the moderate use site (mean rate,  $0.67 \text{ cm min}^{-1}$ ) and the high use site (mean rate,  $0.63 \text{ cm min}^{-1}$ ) (Figure 6). The infiltration rates of the high and moderate use sites were not significantly different. Therefore, these results support the findings of Trumbull et al. (1994) that infiltration rates significantly decreased on recreational sites.

Monti and Mackintosh (1979) measured infiltration rates at recreational sites 20 to 30 times lower than the infiltration rates at control sites. The mean infiltration rate from the low use grassland soil at the Academy was 6 times greater than the moderate and high use sites. Although this difference was not as large as that measured by Monti and Mackintosh (1979), it matched what Lutz (1945) reported from his studies on sandy soils where infiltration rates on high use sites decreased by 6 times when compared to the control sites.

There were several possible reasons for the higher infiltration rate found on the low use site. First, as stated by Dunne and Leopold (1996), the decrease in vegetative cover due to land use changes caused large differences in infiltration on similar soil types. Second, Dawson et al. (1978) found soil macropore space was 18% lower on campsites than the control site.

Another factor affecting infiltration rates may have been macrofaunal activity. Gopher activity on the low use site was extremely high as shown by the large amount of gopher burrow midden that was present throughout the entire low use site. No gopher midden was found on either the moderate or high use site. Gopher burrows, which function as soil macropores, serve to increase infiltration (Pritchett and Fisher, 1987). Macropores are where



**Figure 6.** Mean infiltration rates (with standard errors) for grassland soils at the United States Air Force Academy Jack's Valley Training Area based on intensity of use. Means with the same letter are not significantly different ( $p>0.05$ ).

capillary forces are minimized and gravitational forces predominate allowing water to infiltrate into the soil faster. A feedback probably existed on the low use site where the lack of human recreational activity encouraged mammal activity, which in turn contributed to improved infiltration on the low use site. Reasons for this significant difference in mean infiltration rates included the greater surface vegetative and litter cover, the lower bulk density, the greater porosity, and the large number of gopher burrows on the low use site.

### *Soil Water Holding Capacity*

Soil water holding capacity is defined as the relationship between the "soil water content and the soil water suction" (Klute, 1986). It is important as a measure of the availability of water in the soil for plant uptake. Mean soil water holding capacities of the low use site were not significantly different from the mean soil water holding capacities of either the moderate use or high use sites. Based on intensity of use, water retention curves were made by plotting the mean water contents against the three different pressures in the laboratory (Figure 7). In addition to the lack of a significant difference between the mean soil water holding capacities among the sites, these three moisture retention curves based on intensity of use were quite similar. Therefore, the intensity of use did not impact the soil water holding capacity of the grassland soils in the research area.

The moisture retention curves showed that most water was drained out of the pores with relatively little pressure (0.33 bars, field capacity) being applied. This rapid draining of the macropores was expected due to the coarse texture of these soils. Coarse textured soils contain large numbers of macropores where gravitational forces easily drain the water.

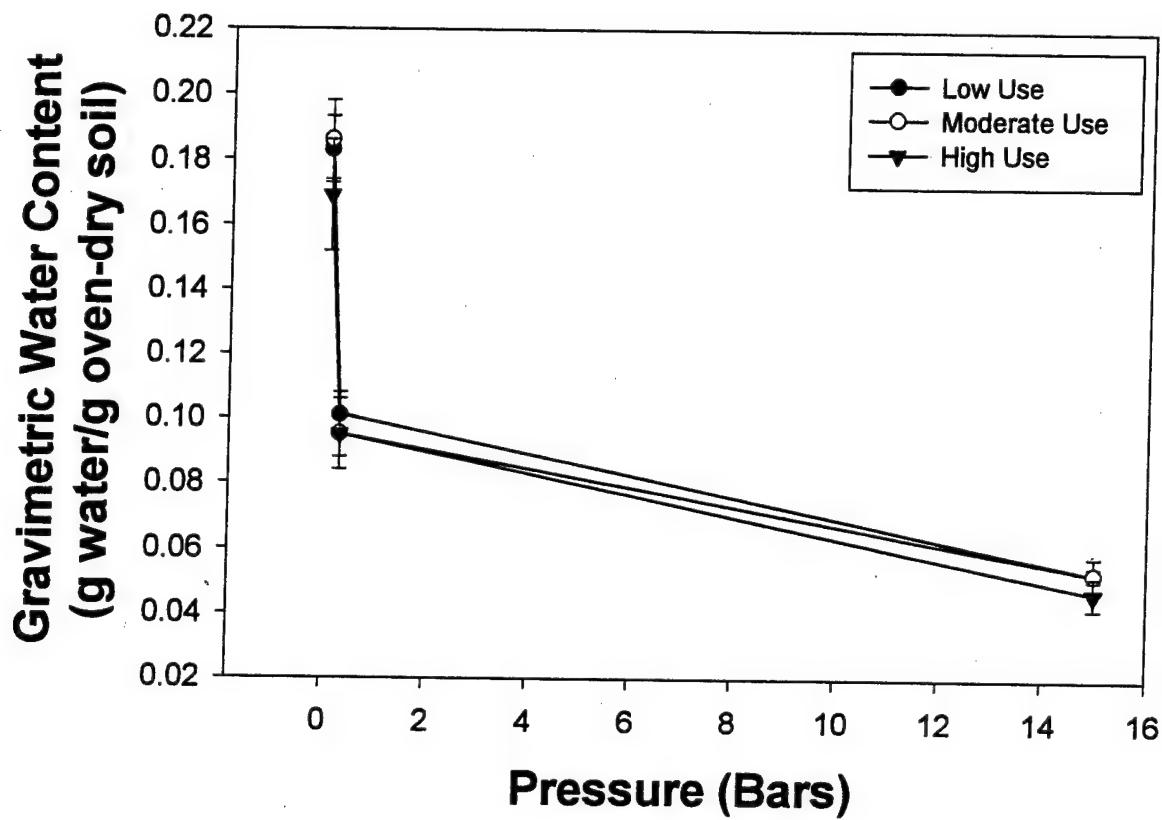


Figure 7. Moisture retention curves (with standard errors) for grassland soils (0-5cm) at the United States Air Force Academy Jack's Valley Training Area based on intensity of use. Pressure was applied at 3 different pressures 0.10 bars, 0.33 bars (field capacity), and 15 bars (permanent wilting point).

Little water remained in the pores as available water of the samples between 0.33 bars (field capacity) and 15 bars (permanent wilting point).

Plot H3 (Figure 3), the center of basic cadet training encampment activity and also the most compacted plot, had a lower gravimetric water content at all 3 pressures than all the other 14 plots. The large differences in mean soil water holding capacities that existed between the H3 plot and the 14 other plots supported the research by Dunn et al. (1980) in that soil water holding capacity and pore space were decreased by recreational trampling on sandy loams. Without further replication of the research comparing the center of basic cadet training encampment activity to the other plots, no definitive relationship of the center of basic cadet training encampment activity to soil water holding capacity can be made.

### *Soil Total Carbon and Nitrogen Analysis*

In most surface soils, carbon and nitrogen are in organic forms. Therefore, there should be a linear relationship between carbon and nitrogen. In this study, a simple linear regression was run to determine if total C concentration was related to total N concentration. A strong relationship ( $r^2=0.92$ ,  $n=75$ ) was found between total C concentration and total N concentration, so the total C fraction was assumed to be in an organic form (Figure 8).

Interestingly, both total C concentrations and total N concentrations decreased with depth in all samples collected across the research area except in the center of basic cadet training encampment, plot H3. In this plot, concentrations were nearly equal at the 0-5 and

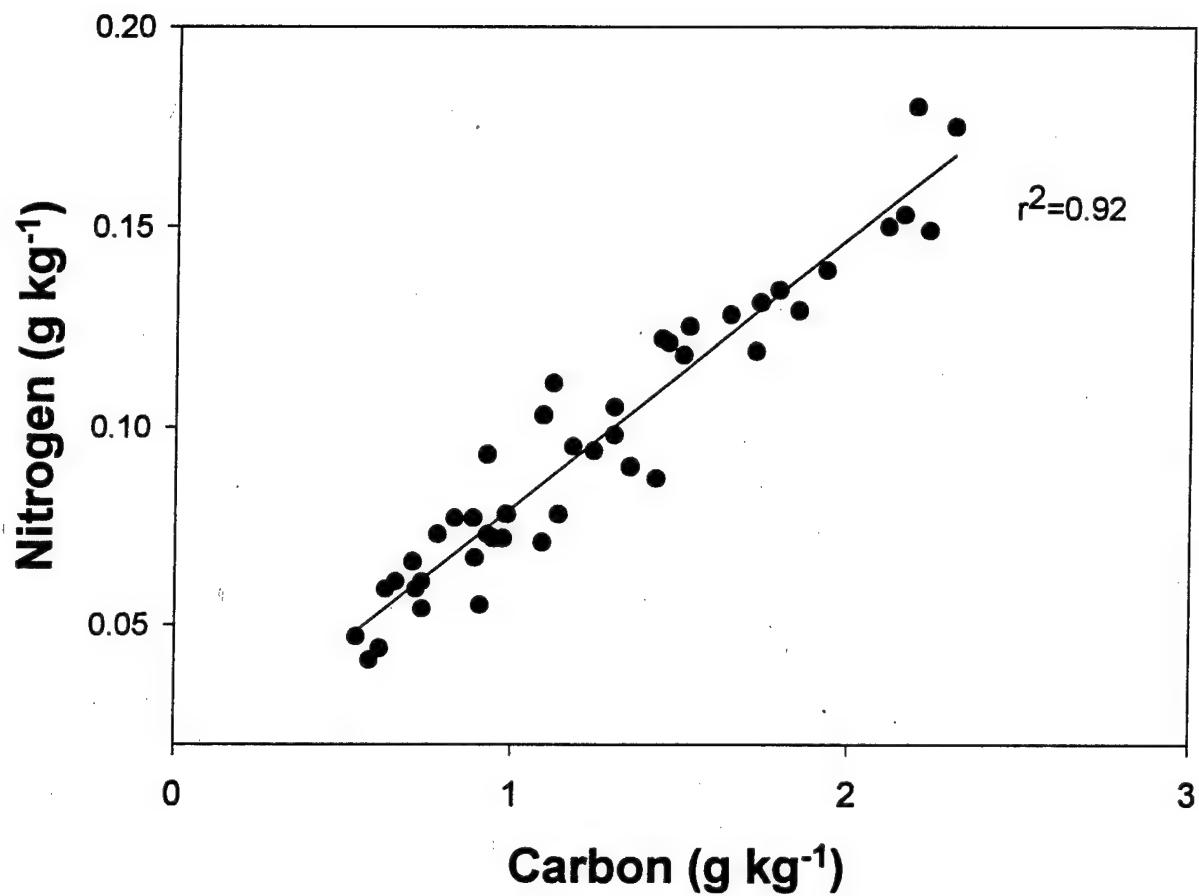


Figure 8. Simple linear regression of total carbon concentration to total nitrogen concentration (with  $r^2$  value,  $n=75$ ) for grassland soils at the United States Air Force Academy Jack's Valley Training Area.

10-20 cm depths, yet highest at the 5-10 cm depths. Further research would be required to establish a statistically significant trend. Reasons, however, for this pattern could have included the surface horizon having been eroded away and/or soils with lower concentrations of carbon and nitrogen may have been dropped on top of the surface of the existing soil while sandbags were being made or set in place.

The total C concentration, total N concentration, and the C:N ratio were all compared by depth (0-5, 5-10, 10-20 cm) using ANOVA and Tukey's studentized range tests based on the different intensities of use to determine whether the amount of site usage affected the nutrient composition. At the 0-5 and 5-10 cm depths, the mean total C concentration of the low use site (1.83 and 1.17 g kg<sup>-1</sup> respectively) was not significantly different from either the mean total C concentration of the moderate use site (1.80 and 1.0 g kg<sup>-1</sup> respectively) or the high use site (1.72 and 1.25 g kg<sup>-1</sup> respectively) (Figure 9). At the 10-20 cm depth, the mean total C concentration of the high use site (0.67 g kg<sup>-1</sup>) was significantly different from the mean total C concentration of the low use site (0.93 g kg<sup>-1</sup>). This difference between the mean total C concentrations of the high use and low use sites based on intensity of use, however, was not meaningful as no pattern existed to explain the difference at this depth of 10-20 cm. At all 3 depths, the mean total N concentration of the low use site (0.13, 0.09, and 0.07 g kg<sup>-1</sup> respectively) was not significantly different from either the mean total N concentration of the moderate use site (0.14, 0.09, and 0.07 g kg<sup>-1</sup> respectively) or the high use site (0.12, 0.1, and 0.05 g kg<sup>-1</sup> respectively). At the 0-5 cm depth, the C:N ratio of the low use site (16.6 mol mol<sup>-1</sup>) was not significantly different from the C:N ratios of the moderate use site (14.8 mol mol<sup>-1</sup>) or the high use site (16.4 mol mol<sup>-1</sup>). At the 5-10 and

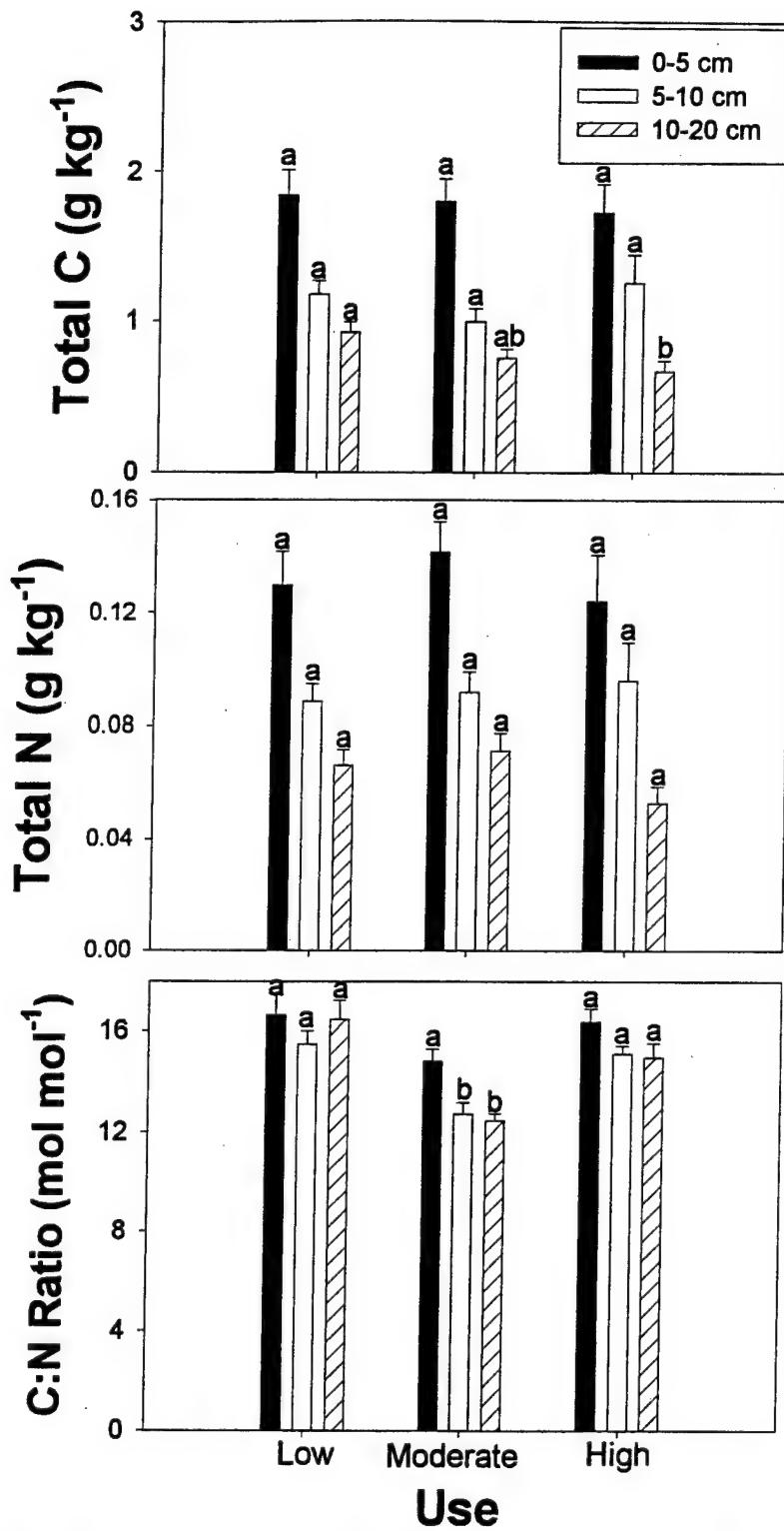


Figure 9. Mean total carbon concentration, total nitrogen concentration, and ratio of total carbon to total nitrogen concentration (with standard errors) for grassland soils at the United States Air Force Academy Jack's Valley Training Area based on intensity of use. Means within a depth and with same letter are not significantly different ( $p < 0.05$ ).

10-20 cm depths, the C:N ratio of the moderate use site (12.7 and 12.4 g mol mol<sup>-1</sup> respectively), however, was significantly different from the C:N ratio of the low use site (15.5 and 16.4 g mol mol<sup>-1</sup> respectively) and the high use site (15.1 and 14.9 g mol mol<sup>-1</sup> respectively). This difference between the C:N ratios based on intensity of use, however, was not meaningful as no pattern existed to explain the difference. Therefore, the intensity of use did not affect nutrient composition on these grassland soils.

### *Plant Biomass and Litter*

The research area is composed of basically 3 grassland communities: the low use site contains a native grassland community type, *Stipa-Koeleria* species; the moderate use site and the edges of the high use site contain early to mid-seral stage grassland/bare ground and a community type, *Stipa-Koeleria* species (*Stipa* species for the edges of the high use); the center of the high use site contains an early-seral stage grassland/bare ground and a community type, *Bromus* species.

Because the entire biomass of a species within the plot was composited, statistical analysis could not be conducted. Graphical and descriptive comparisons of the total aboveground biomass and litter were only used, however, to compare the impacts of the differing intensities of use (Figure 10). These results reinforced the findings of Monti and Mackintosh (1979) and Dunn et al. (1980) in that recreational activity denuded vegetation and the litter layer on the campground. Dunn and Carroll (1985) found recreational use decreased vegetation and litter by 56%. They also found that the center of campsites were more denuded than the rest of the camping area. Research on Illinois campsites found litter

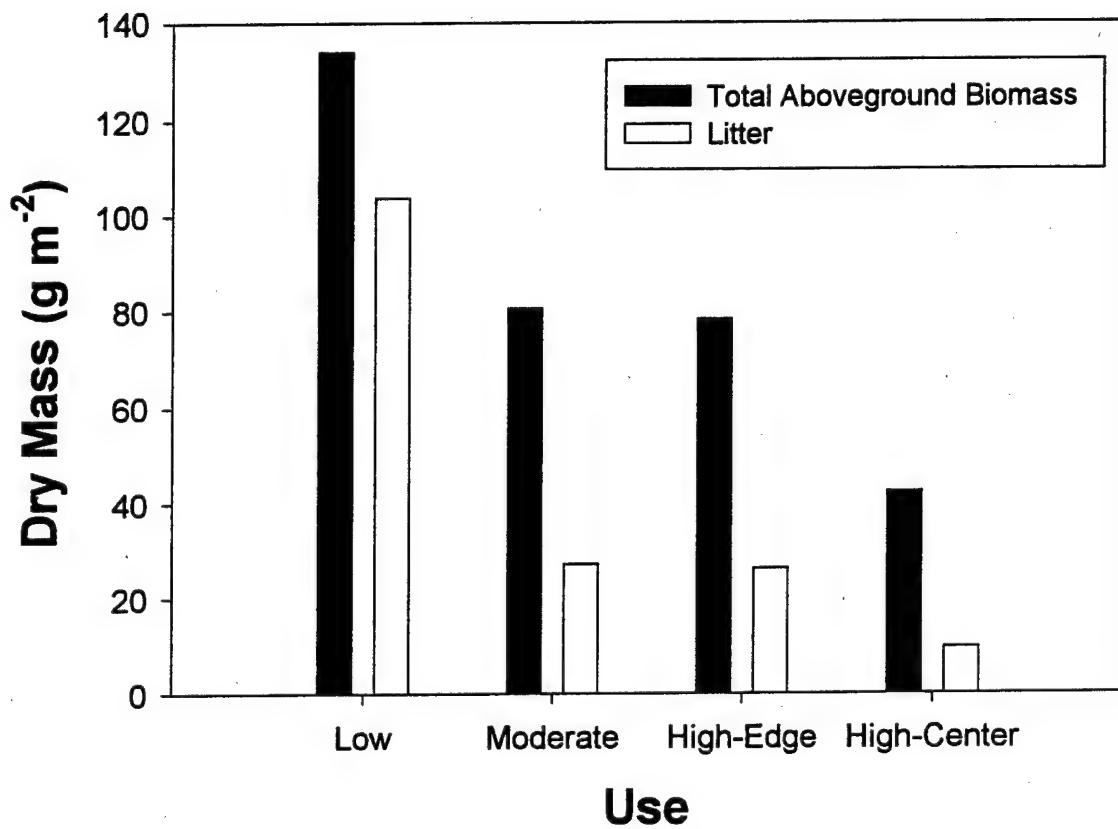


Figure 10. Comparison of total aboveground biomass and litter for grassland soils at the United States Air Force Academy Jack's Valley Training Area based on intensity of use (high use site divided into 2 plots: a plot in the center of basic cadet training encampment area and a plot at the edge of encampment area).

layers decreased by 71% (Young, 1978). The research findings from the Academy even exceed Dunn and Carroll's (1985) measured decrease in vegetation and litter and Young's measured decrease in litter layer. A comparison between the low use plot and the high use plot in the center of the basic cadet training encampment area showed a 68% decrease in total aboveground biomass and a 91% decrease in litter. A comparison between the low use plot and both the moderate use plot and the high use plot on the edge of the encampment area showed less of a difference, but still a large difference, of a 40% decrease in total aboveground biomass and a 75% decrease in litter. Based on past research, possible reasons for this drastic denudation of vegetation and litter from the moderate and high use sites included the actual mechanical trampling of vegetation by the cadets (Dunn, 1984), the moderate impact from the lug-soled boots used by the cadets (Cole, 1995); the kicking up of gravel damaging the vegetation (especially on the high use plots in the center of the basic cadet training encampment area, H2 and H3, where coarse fragment content was high) (Dunn, 1984); and the apparent relationship of the absence of roots in the surface horizon to the high bulk densities in the surface horizons, as found on the high and moderate use sites.

Wagar (1964) found that grasses were more tolerant than broad-leaved species to recreational trampling. Yorks et al. (1997) reported that following recreation, forbs suffered immediate loss, and shrubs and trees decreased in long term diversity. A comparison between the low use plot and the high use plot-center of the encampment area showed a 78% decrease in forb biomass. A comparison between the low use plot and the moderate use plot showed a 76% decrease in forb biomass. As suggested by the research of Dawson et al. (1978) and Dunn et al. (1980), the basic cadet training encampment activities and other

training use induced disturbance, which led to the early-seral annuals/bare ground communities found on the high and moderate use sites. Though statistically unsubstantiated, it appeared the basic cadet training activities on the test sites drastically denuded the vegetative cover and litter layer, and reduced the lifeform diversity.

### *Soil Erosion*

Due to the pseudo-replication in the experimental design of this research, these results cannot be applied outside of the research area without additional study. Past research findings, however, support the findings of this research that human trampling activities lead to increased bulk densities, decreased infiltration, and decreased plant biomass and litter. Therefore, the impacts of cadet and other uses found during this research effort and supported by past research can lead to additional research and application in principle only.

The research on the grassland soils at the United States Air Force Academy Jack's Valley indicated that the basic cadet training encampment activities and other training uses led to: increased bulk density and compaction, decreased infiltration rates, decreased vegetative biomass and litter, and decreased vegetative lifeform diversity. Research by Settergen and Cole (1970), Monti and Mackintosh (1979), and Trumbull et al. (1994) suggested that sites, such as the basic cadet training sites, with low infiltration rates, increased runoff, reduced vegetation, and minimal litter layers were susceptible to soil erosion. Trumbull et al.'s research (1994) on campsites indicated a loss of 28 to 61 cm of soil from recreational sites. Though actual erosion rates from the early-seral grasses/bare ground communities on the high and moderate use sites were not measured, USLE was

used to estimate gross soil erosion rates (A). Erosion rate for the low use plot (rate, 0.07 tons  $ha^{-1} year^{-1}$ ) was 30 times smaller than the erosion rate for the high use plot in the center of the basic cadet training encampment area (rate, 2 tons  $ha^{-1} year^{-1}$ ). The erosion rate for the low use plot was between 6 and 7 times smaller than the erosion rates for the moderate use plot and the high use plot on the edge of the encampment area (rate, 0.5 and 0.4 tons  $ha^{-1} year^{-1}$  respectively). Training activities appeared to have drastically increased soil erosion on the high and moderate use sites. As more soil and litter are eroded from the research area, more vegetation is lost, resulting in even more soil erosion. Soil erosion from the grassland sites in JVTA will degrade the plant and animal habitat and will diminish the water quality and aquatic habitat of Monument Creek. Therefore, some restoration efforts should be undertaken.

### *Management and Restoration*

Use of the research area for basic cadet training encampment is essential to the mission of the United States Air Force Academy. Continued use of the research area for basic cadet training encampment and other uses, however, will further degrade the soils and vegetation to such an extent that soil erosion will result. The research by Dr. McClendon's research team will produce additional information, recommendations, and a land management tool, the EDYS model, to assist in making sound land management decisions. Past research indicated several management and restoration practices, if properly implemented, will minimize the impacts of the training use. These practices include, but are not limited to:

1. Significantly reducing or eliminating the other training uses.

2. Restricting training to roads, trails, and previously established areas. Past research, though not completely in agreement, seems to indicate that concentrating use to a few sites, when properly managed, is preferred over spreading out training use.
3. Implement comprehensive education and awareness programs.
4. Revegetation with native and resistant grasses should occur several meters outside of basic cadet training encampment area center. In the center, apply mulch to reduce soil erosion. Temporary fencing or planting of shrubs will reduce spread of trampling.
5. In compacted areas outside of the center of the basic cadet training encampment area, aerating the soil will help alleviate compaction, improve infiltration, decrease runoff, and thereby facilitate revegetation efforts.

## Conclusion

As stated earlier, the Department of Defense is increasingly aware of and becoming more proactive in regard to environmental management. In keeping with this environmental mission, this research has several implications for the United States Air Force Academy's use of Jack's Valley Training Area. Three years of intensive use has caused significant impacts which include increased bulk densities and compaction, decreased infiltration, and decreased plant biomass and litter. Continued use will likely cause increased soil erosion, which could diminish plant growth, damage animal and aquatic habitats, and decrease water quality. Therefore, management and restoration practices should be implemented, in conjunction with the Air Force Academy funded EDYS modeling effort, to minimize the impacts of this training use.

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## Appendix I

### *Bulk Density and Coarse Fragment Data*

Sample Number	Pre-Encampment Bulk Density	Post-Encampment Bulk Density	Coarse Fragments	Pre-Encampment Adjusted Bulk Density	Post-Encampment Adjusted Bulk Density
L1-1	0.96	1.26	18.31	0.87	1.19
L1-2	0.94	1.09	8.80	0.90	1.05
L1-3	0.82	1.19	8.84	0.77	1.16
L1-4	0.88	1.21	13.51	0.81	1.15
L1-5	1.01	1.09	13.02	0.95	1.04
L2-1	0.95	1.20	21.65	0.84	1.11
L2-2	1.15	1.25	17.85	1.08	1.18
L2-3	1.03	1.31	30.71	0.89	1.19
L2-4	1.16	1.31	26.62	1.04	1.21
L2-5	1.15	1.21	14.80	1.08	1.15
L3-1	0.97	1.07	8.11	0.93	1.03
L3-2	0.99	1.18	22.55	0.88	1.09
L3-3	1.02	1.12	15.41	0.95	1.05
L3-4	1.05	0.90	18.55	0.97	0.81
L3-5	1.05	1.13	12.46	0.99	1.08
L4-1	0.96	1.03	9.09	0.91	0.99
L4-2	1.01	1.11	18.58	0.92	1.03
L4-3	1.09	1.41	22.20	0.99	1.33
L4-4	1.11	0.95	15.66	1.05	0.87
L4-5	0.94	0.96	5.02	0.92	0.94
L5-1	1.14	1.15	23.97	1.04	1.05
L5-2	1.17	1.12	17.65	1.10	1.05
L5-3	1.12	1.02	13.68	1.06	0.95
L5-4	1.16	1.24	18.39	1.08	1.17
L5-5	1.14	1.31	18.35	1.07	1.24
M1-1	1.21	1.37	10.07	1.17	1.34
M1-2	1.38	1.37	5.20	1.37	1.35
M1-3	1.17	1.40	12.40	1.12	1.36
M1-4	1.25	1.29	11.59	1.21	1.24
M1-5	1.33	1.38	5.60	1.31	1.36
M2-1	1.51	1.41	20.69	1.44	1.33
M2-2	1.38	1.44	25.61	1.29	1.35
M2-3	1.33	1.45	16.78	1.26	1.40
M2-4	1.46	1.46	19.45	1.39	1.40
M2-5	1.38	1.50	27.05	1.28	1.41
M3-1	1.30	1.49	13.50	1.25	1.44
M3-2	1.30	1.37	19.70	1.22	1.30
M3-3	1.20	1.47	23.06	1.11	1.39
M3-4	1.33	1.31	16.22	1.27	1.25
M3-5	1.30	1.28	12.19	1.25	1.23

*Bulk Density and Coarse Fragment Data (continued)*

Sample Number	Pre-Encampment Bulk Density	Post-Encampment Bulk Density	Coarse Fragments	Pre-Encampment Adjusted Bulk Density	Post-Encampment Adjusted Bulk Density
M4-1	1.32	1.38	9.48	1.28	1.35
M4-2	1.34	1.37	15.79	1.29	1.31
M4-3	1.13	1.33	19.58	1.04	1.26
M4-4	1.25	1.46	22.18	1.16	1.39
M4-5	1.09	1.41	18.99	1.01	1.34
M5-1	1.14	1.42	19.35	1.05	1.35
M5-2	1.37	1.40	25.00	1.28	1.31
M5-3	1.34	1.58	36.56	1.20	1.47
M5-4	1.31	1.56	33.15	1.18	1.46
M5-5	1.40	1.56	34.31	1.27	1.45
H1-1	1.16	1.37	16.11	1.09	1.31
H1-2	1.21	1.38	16.40	1.15	1.33
H1-3	1.22	1.36	14.53	1.16	1.31
H1-4	1.27	1.39	19.76	1.19	1.31
H1-5	1.28	1.40	12.90	1.23	1.35
H2-1	1.23	1.46	22.62	1.14	1.39
H2-2	1.37	1.36	21.76	1.29	1.28
H2-3	1.18	1.50	41.60	1.00	1.35
H2-4	1.76	1.60	43.01	1.64	1.46
H2-5	1.73	1.57	37.12	1.63	1.45
H3-1	1.33	1.62	91.86	0.90	1.28
H3-2	1.47	1.57	96.51	1.05	1.20
H3-3	1.54	1.84	136.41	0.89	1.37
H3-4	1.53	1.46	63.54	1.29	1.21
H3-5	1.58	1.41	90.02	1.23	1.01
H4-1	1.31	1.39	17.05	1.24	1.33
H4-2	1.36	1.42	23.97	1.27	1.33
H4-3	1.29	1.42	18.64	1.21	1.35
H4-4	1.40	1.36	14.03	1.35	1.31
H4-5	1.41	1.46	16.99	1.35	1.40
H5-1	1.26	1.32	12.03	1.21	1.28
H5-2	1.42	1.52	26.06	1.32	1.43
H5-3	1.29	1.32	9.31	1.26	1.29
H5-4	1.35	1.42	14.70	1.30	1.37
H5-5	1.41	1.47	23.31	1.32	1.39

## Appendix II

### *Infiltration Rate Data*

Site	Rate (cm/min)	Site Mean
L1	2.71	
L2	3.14	
L3	3.93	
L4	5.45	
L5	3.90	3.83
M1	0.68	
M2	0.57	
M3	0.61	
M4	0.76	
M5	0.73	0.67
H1	0.41	
H2	0.65	
H3	1.00	
H4	0.55	
H5	0.53	0.63

## Appendix III

### *Particle Size Analysis Results*

Plot	Depth	Texture	Sand	Silt	Clay	Very Coarse Sand	Coarse Sand	Medium Sand	Fine Sand	Very Fine Sand	Coarse Silt	Fine Silt
			%									
L1	0-5	Sandy Loam	64	28	8	11	10	11	19	13	16	12
	5-10	Sandy Loam	63	27	10	11	9	12	19	13	14	13
	10-20	Sandy Loam	62	28	10	7	7	13	20	15	12	16
L2	0-5	Sandy Loam	60	30	10	6	7	12	20	15	12	18
	5-10	Sandy Loam	56	34	10	6	6	10	19	14	20	14
	10-20	Sandy Loam	60	30	10	6	6	12	20	16	14	16
L3	0-5	Sandy Loam	63	30	7	10	11	13	16	12	14	16
	5-10	Sandy Loam	64	29	7	12	11	13	16	12	15	14
	10-20	Sandy Loam	64	29	7	12	12	13	16	12	15	14
L4	0-5	Loamy Coarse Sand	73	24	3	12	15	16	18	11	13	11
	5-10	Coarse Sandy Loam	73	23	4	13	14	15	19	12	13	10
	10-20	Loamy Coarse Sand	77	19	4	14	14	17	19	12	10	9
L5	0-5	Loamy Coarse Sand	76	20	4	11	15	18	20	11	12	8
	5-10	Loamy Coarse Sand	77	19	4	14	15	18	20	11	11	8
	10-20	Loamy Coarse Sand	78	18	4	17	15	18	19	10	10	8

*Particle Size Analysis Results (continued)*

Plot	Depth	Texture	Sand	Silt	Clay	Very Coarse Sand	Coarse Sand	Medium Sand	Fine Sand	Very Fine Sand	Coarse Silt	Fine Silt
	cm							%				
M1	0-5	Fine Sandy Loam	67	27	6	7	9	14	24	14	14	13
	5-10	Fine Sandy Loam	69	26	5	6	8	15	27	14	13	13
	10-20	Fine Sandy Loam	70	24	6	5	7	15	28	15	12	12
M2	0-5	Loamy Sand	75	21	4	11	12	18	23	12	11	10
	5-10	Loamy Sand	75	21	4	11	11	17	24	12	12	9
	10-20	Loamy Sand	77	19	4	11	11	18	25	12	11	8
M3	0-5	Sandy Loam	74	19	7	8	10	19	25	13	10	9
	5-10	Sandy Loam	74	19	7	9	11	18	24	12	11	8
	10-20	Sandy Loam	72	21	7	7	10	17	25	13	11	10
M4	0-5	Sandy Loam	66	25	9	7	8	17	23	12	14	11
	5-10	Sandy Loam	67	25	8	7	8	16	23	13	13	12
	10-20	Sandy Loam	69	23	8	8	8	17	23	13	12	11
M5	0-5	Coarse Sandy Loam	75	19	6	13	16	17	19	9	10	9
	5-10	Loamy Coarse Sand	79	16	5	17	17	19	18	8	8	8
	10-20	Loamy Coarse Sand	80	15	5	20	17	18	18	8	8	7

*Particle Size Analysis Results (continued)*

Plot	Depth	Texture	Sand	Silt	Clay	Very Coarse Sand	Coarse Sand	Medium Sand	Fine Sand	Very Fine Sand	Coarse Silt	Fine Silt
			%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
H1	0-5	Sandy Loam	61	31	8	8	10	14	18	11	14	17
	5-10	Sandy Loam	62	30	8	10	9	14	18	11	14	16
	10-20	Sandy Loam	67	26	7	9	10	15	21	12	13	13
H2	0-5	Coarse Sandy Loam	72	22	6	15	15	17	16	9	11	11
	5-10	Coarse Sandy Loam	72	22	6	16	15	16	16	9	11	11
	10-20	Loamy Coarse Sand	77	18	5	20	16	17	16	8	8	10
H3	0-5	Loamy Coarse Sand	80	12	8	23	19	18	15	7	5	7
	5-10	Coarse Sandy Loam	71	20	9	15	15	16	17	9	9	11
	10-20	Coarse Sandy Loam	71	23	6	14	13	16	18	9	12	11
H4	0-5	Sandy Loam	69	25	6	8	12	17	20	12	11	14
	5-10	Sandy Loam	70	24	6	9	12	16	20	12	12	12
	10-20	Sandy Loam	71	23	6	10	13	16	20	12	11	12
H5	0-5	Sandy Loam	68	26	6	9	13	15	19	11	13	13
	5-10	Sandy Loam	70	24	6	11	12	17	19	11	11	13
	10-20	Sandy Loam	71	23	6	11	13	18	18	11	11	12

## Appendix IV

### *Soil Water Holding Capacity Data*

Sample Number	Gravimetric Water Content at 0.10 Bar	Gravimetric Water Content at 0.33 Bar	Gravimetric Water Content at 15 Bars
L1-1A	0.20	0.12	0.06
L1-2A	0.21	0.12	0.06
L2-1A	0.18	0.12	0.05
L2-2A	0.20	0.11	0.05
L3-1A	0.20	0.12	0.05
L3-2A	0.22	0.11	0.06
L4-1A	0.15	0.08	0.06
L4-2A	0.19	0.10	0.05
L5-1A	0.15	0.06	0.04
L5-2A	0.13	0.07	0.04
M1-1A	0.21	0.11	0.06
M1-2A	0.18	0.09	0.04
M2-1A	0.18	0.09	0.05
M2-2A	0.18	0.09	0.05
M3-1A	0.15	0.08	0.09
M3-2A	0.14	0.09	0.04
M4-1A	0.22	0.14	0.05
M4-2A	0.26	0.11	0.05
M5-1A	0.15	0.08	0.05
M5-2A	0.19	0.07	0.03
H1-1A	0.24	0.15	0.08
H1-2A	0.22	0.13	0.05
H2-1A	0.13	0.09	0.04
H2-2A	0.15	0.08	0.04
H3-1A	0.12	0.04	0.03
H3-2A	0.08	0.05	0.03
H4-1A	0.20	0.11	0.06
H4-2A	0.21	0.10	0.04
H5-1A	0.19	0.10	0.04
H5-2A	0.15	0.10	0.05

## Appendix V

### *Total Carbon and Nitrogen Concentration Analysis Results*

Plot	Depth (cm)	Carbon (g kg <sup>-1</sup> )	Nitrogen (g kg <sup>-1</sup> )	C:N (mol mol <sup>-1</sup> )
L1	0-5	2.154	0.153	16.42
L1	5-10	1.301	0.105	14.46
L1	10-20	0.982	0.078	14.69
L2	0-5	1.460	0.121	14.08
L2	5-10	0.980	0.078	14.66
L2	10-20	0.889	0.067	15.48
L3	0-5	1.927	0.139	16.17
L3	5-10	1.301	0.098	15.49
L3	10-20	1.136	0.078	16.99
L4	0-5	2.229	0.149	17.45
L4	5-10	1.348	0.090	17.47
L4	10-20	0.905	0.055	19.20
L5	0-5	1.425	0.087	19.11
L5	5-10	0.943	0.072	15.28
L5	10-20	0.732	0.054	15.95
M1	0-5	2.108	0.150	16.40
M1	5-10	1.178	0.095	14.47
M1	10-20	0.704	0.066	12.44
M2	0-5	1.521	0.125	14.20
M2	5-10	1.089	0.103	12.33
M2	10-20	0.623	0.059	12.32
M3	0-5	1.440	0.122	13.77
M3	5-10	0.828	0.077	12.55
M3	10-20	0.653	0.061	12.49
M4	0-5	2.189	0.180	14.19
M4	5-10	1.119	0.111	11.76
M4	10-20	0.923	0.093	11.58
M5	0-5	1.732	0.131	15.42
M5	5-10	0.777	0.073	12.42
M5	10-20	0.883	0.077	13.38
H1	0-5	2.301	0.175	15.34
H1	5-10	1.504	0.118	14.87
H1	10-20	0.714	0.059	14.12
H2	0-5	1.846	0.129	16.76
H2	5-10	0.730	0.061	13.96
H2	10-20	0.537	0.047	13.33
H3	0-5	1.088	0.071	17.88
H3	5-10	1.787	0.134	15.56
H3	10-20	0.925	0.073	14.78
H4	0-5	1.643	0.128	14.98
H4	5-10	1.240	0.094	15.39
H4	10-20	0.607	0.044	16.09
H5	0-5	1.720	0.119	16.86
H5	5-10	0.972	0.072	15.75
H5	10-20	0.576	0.041	16.39

## Appendix VI

### Total Aboveground Biomass and Litter Results

Low Use Plot			Moderate Use Plot		
Species	Dry Mass (g m <sup>-2</sup> )	% Relative Biomass	Species	Dry Mass (g m <sup>-2</sup> )	% Relative Biomass
<i>Stipa comata</i>	47.4	35.3	<i>Koeleria macrantha</i>	35.2	43.7
<i>Artemisia frigida</i>	35.74	26.7	<i>Stipa comata</i>	19.6	24.3
<i>Sporobolus asper</i>	14.3	10.7	<i>Carex rossii</i>	5.6	6.9
<i>Carex rossii</i>	10.1	7.5	<i>Bouteloua gracilis</i>	4.2	5.2
<i>Bouteloua gracilis</i>	8.6	6.4	<i>Sporobolus asper</i>	3.5	4.3
<i>Eriogonum annuum</i>	2.8	2.1	<i>Agropyron smithii</i>	3.4	4.2
<i>Bromus tectorum</i>	2.1	1.5	<i>Rosa woodsii</i>	1.5	1.9
<i>Verbascum thapsus</i>	1.9	1.4	<i>Thelosperma megapotamicum</i>	1.2	1.5
<i>Tradescantia occidentalis</i>	1.9	1.4	<i>Heterotheca villosa</i>	1.1	1.4
<i>Sitanion hystrix</i>	1.7	1.3	<i>Artemisia frigida</i>	0.9	1.2
<i>Poa pratensis</i>	1.7	1.3	<i>Oenothera albicaulis</i>	0.9	1.1
<i>Linaria dalmatica</i>	1.3	1.0	<i>Dalea purpurea</i>	0.7	0.9
<i>Koeleria macrantha</i>	1.1	0.8	<i>Linaria dalmatica</i>	0.6	0.7
<i>Bromus japonicus</i>	1.1	0.8	<i>Lesquerella montana</i>	0.5	0.6
<i>Senecio fendleri</i>	0.6	0.5	<i>Tradescantia occidentalis</i>	0.4	0.5
<i>Dalea purpurea</i>	0.4	0.3	<i>Tragopogon dubius</i>	0.4	0.5
<i>Gaura coccinea</i>	0.4	0.3	<i>Lithospermum incisum</i>	0.4	0.5
<i>Cryptantha sp.</i>	0.3	0.2	<i>Latris punctata</i>	0.4	0.5
<i>Agropyron smithii</i>	0.3	0.2	<i>Plantago patagonica</i>	0.1	0.1
<i>Conyza canadensis</i>	0.3	0.2	Total aboveground biomass	80.7	
<i>Sporobolus cryptandrus</i>	0.3	0.1	Biomass-Grasses	65.9	
Total aboveground biomass	134.1		Biomass-Forts/Sedges	13.3	
Biomass-Grasses	78.5		Biomass-Shrubs	1.5	
Biomass-Forts/Sedges	55.6		Litter	1.5	
Litter	103.8			27.2	

*Total Aboveground Biomass and Litter Results (continued)*

High Use Plot-Center of Encampment		
Species	Dry Mass (g m <sup>-2</sup> )	% Relative Biomass
<i>Bromus tectorum</i>	13.6	32.1
<i>Erodium cicutarium</i>	6.8	16.1
<i>Poa pratensis</i>	6.7	15.8
<i>Sitanion hystris</i>	4.9	11.6
<i>Sporobolus cryptandrus</i>	3.1	7.4
<i>Carex rossii</i>	1.1	2.6
<i>Plantago patagonica</i>	1.0	2.4
<i>Dalea purpurea</i>	0.9	2.1
<i>Cryptantha virgata</i>	0.9	2.0
<i>Bouteloua gracilis</i>	0.8	1.9
<i>Koeleria macrantha</i>	0.7	1.7
<i>Conyza canadensis</i>	0.6	1.3
<i>Linaria dalmatica</i>	0.4	1.0
<i>Agropyron smithii</i>	0.3	0.7
<i>Vulpia octoflora</i>	0.2	0.5
<i>Taraxacum officinale</i>	0.1	0.3
<i>Antennaria parvifolia</i>	0.1	0.3
<i>Linum sp.</i>	0.1	0.1
<b>Total aboveground biomass</b>	<b>42.4</b>	
Biomass-Grasses	30.4	
Biomass-Forts/Sedges	12.0	
Litter	9.7	

High Use Plot-Edge of Encampment		
Species	Dry Mass (g m <sup>-2</sup> )	% Relative Biomass
<i>Stipa comata</i>	17.9	22.9
<i>Sporobolus asper</i>	10.5	13.4
<i>Linaria dalmatica</i>	8.6	11.0
<i>Poa pratensis</i>	8.4	10.8
<i>Carex rossii</i>	7.3	9.3
<i>Bromus tectorum</i>	4.7	6.0
<i>Koeleria macrantha</i>	3.8	4.8
<i>Bouteloua gracilis</i>	3.3	4.2
<i>Artemisia frigida</i>	2.7	3.4
<i>Andropogon gerardii</i>	2.3	3.0
<i>Heterotheca villosa</i>	2.2	2.8
<i>Dalea purpurea</i>	1.5	2.0
<i>Vulpia octoflora</i>	1.2	1.5
<i>Verbena bracteata</i>	1.1	1.4
<i>Plantago patagonica</i>	0.9	1.1
<i>Lithospermum incisum</i>	0.6	0.7
<i>Erodium cicutarium</i>	0.3	0.4
<i>Sporobolus cryptandrus</i>	0.3	0.3
<i>Veronica thapsoides</i>	0.2	0.3
<i>Taraxacum officinale</i>	0.1	0.1
<i>Castilleja linearifolia</i>	0.1	0.1
<i>Arenaria fenderi</i>	0.1	0.1
<i>Unknown 7</i>	0.1	0.1
<i>Eriogonum annuum</i>	0.1	0.1
<i>Cryptantha virgata</i>	0.1	0.1
<b>Total aboveground biomass</b>	<b>78.4</b>	
Biomass-Grasses	52.4	
Biomass-Forts/Sedges	26.0	
Litter	26.2	

## Appendix VII

### *Universal Soil Loss Equation Data*

Plot	Acres	R	K	L	S	LS	C	P	A	Total (tons ha <sup>-1</sup> year <sup>-1</sup> )
Low Use	1	80	0.15	250	2	0.34	0.008	1	0.07	0.07
Moderate Use	1	80	0.15	250	1	0.22	0.08	1	0.5	0.5
High Use-Edge	1	80	0.14	250	1	0.22	0.08	1	0.4	0.4
High Use-Center	1	80	0.14	250	1	0.22	0.38	1	2.0	2.0

FOOT TRAFFIC EFFECTS ON GRASSLAND SOIL PROPERTIES AT THE  
UNITED STATES AIR FORCE ACADEMY, COLORADO, USA  
*By Randy Charles Albert Whitecotton, Captain, USAF*

Soils and vegetation are subjected to stress and disturbance under human foot traffic. This study was conducted to determine whether cadet and other training activities at the United States Air Force Academy adversely impacted soils and vegetation. In the summer of 1998, the effects of the cadet and other training on bulk density, infiltration, soil water holding capacity, soil total C and N concentrations, soil C:N ratio, total aboveground biomass, and litter layer were comparatively studied at the Air Force Academy's Jack's Valley Training Area, on Pring sandy loam (coarse-loamy, mixed Aridic Haploborolls) and Tomah loamy sand (coarse-loamy, mixed Boralfic Argiborolls). In May-June 1998 after 2 years of intensive training use, bulk densities of the top 6 cm of soil were measured. Mean bulk densities on the high use site ( $1.37 \text{ g cm}^{-3}$ ) and moderate use site ( $1.30 \text{ g cm}^{-3}$ ) were significantly different from the mean bulk density of the low use (reference) site ( $1.04 \text{ g cm}^{-3}$ ). Adjusted bulk densities (adjusted for coarse fragment content) followed a similar pattern. In August 1998, following the 3rd basic cadet training encampment on the research area, bulk density samples were collected (post-encampment) and compared to the samples from earlier in the summer (pre-encampment). Post-encampment mean bulk densities and adjusted bulk densities were significantly higher than the pre-encampment bulk densities. Mean infiltration rates on the high use site ( $0.63 \text{ cm min}^{-1}$ ) and the moderate use site ( $0.67 \text{ cm min}^{-1}$ ) were significantly different from the mean infiltration rate on the low use site ( $3.83 \text{ cm min}^{-1}$ ). Mean soil water holding capacities of the three sites were not significantly different. The soil total C concentration, soil total N concentration, and C:N ratio of the three sites in each of the three depths (0-5, 5-10, and 10-20 cm) were not significantly different (or, if a significant difference between intensities of use was found, no pattern existed to explain the difference). Descriptive comparisons of the total aboveground biomass and litter showed a 68% decrease in total aboveground biomass and 91% decrease in litter when the high use site was compared to the low use site. Using the Universal Soil Loss Equation, an estimated soil erosion rate for the low use plot (rate,  $0.07 \text{ tons ha}^{-1} \text{ year}^{-1}$ ) was computed to be 30 times smaller than the erosion rate for the high use plot in the center of the basic cadet training area (rate,  $2 \text{ tons ha}^{-1} \text{ year}^{-1}$ ) and between 6 and 7 times smaller than the moderate use plot and the high use plot on the edge of the encampment area (rate,  $0.5$  and  $0.4 \text{ tons ha}^{-1} \text{ year}^{-1}$  respectively). Therefore, training use appears to adversely affect bulk density, infiltration, total aboveground biomass, litter, and soil erosion. Without restoration practices being implemented, previous research indicates that sites with increased bulk densities, decreased infiltration, and decreased total aboveground biomass and litter would be subject to increased site degradation.

**Key Resources:**

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